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General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda items 17 (a), 19 and 69

Macroeconomic policy questions: international trade and development

Sustainable development

Promotion and protection of human rights

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Letter dated 6 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you a summary of losses sustained by the health sector in the Syrian Arab Republic in the course of the current events that are being caused by the operations of the armed terrorist groups and the imposition of illegal and unilateral measures by certain States and regional entities.

The health sector in Syria, its humanitarian character notwithstanding, is one of the main sectors in which heavy losses have been sustained from the terrorist acts to which the country is being subjected. It is one of the sectors to be most strongly underpinned by the State, with the aim of providing the Syrian people and other residents in the country with the highest standard of health service free of charge or at nominal cost.

Those major losses have been sustained as a result of the systematic and continual attacks, the number of which has escalated over the past two months in particular, that the terrorist groups have carried out on hospitals and health centres, many of which have been rendered non-operational. In the course of those attacks, many doctors and health sector workers were targeted and killed, abducted, raped and terrorized. Ambulances and their crews have been targeted, as have even persons working in the humanitarian field, both national and international personnel, who were attempting to assist the civilians that the armed terrorist groups were using as human shields. The terrorist groups have stolen medication from hospitals, health centres and pharmaceutical warehouses, thus depriving needy civilians in order to treat the armed men. What the gangs were unable to steal, they destroyed.

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What is so unfortunate is that those and other crimes are perpetrated under the protection and with the political and media backing of well-known regional States and groups, whose media fabricate reports that are directed towards the international parties, with a view to inverting the facts. International organizations and institutions subsequently adopt those fabricated reports and present them as incontrovertible truths, whereas the aim of those reports is to encourage those gangs to continue to commit their crimes.

On 25 July 2012, armed terrorist groups targeted the headquarters of the Aleppo governorate emergency services and stole 16 ambulances in addition to a large number of emergency and first aid kits that were in the building.

The numbers set forth below summarize the damage that has been caused in the health sector by attacks since events began, to 22 July 2012. They do not include human losses, or the losses sustained as a result of the most recent crime in Aleppo that is referred to above. It should be noted that losses have risen in the past six weeks as the pace of the foreign-supported and financed terrorism directed against Syria has escalated.

1. Number of hospitals damaged:

A total of 35 hospitals have been damaged, of which 11 were damaged between 7 June and 22 July 2012. Of those, 10 were put out of service, including the hospitals in Manbij and Al Bab, the I'zaz hospital in Aleppo, the National, Qusayr and Nu'aimi hospitals in Homs governorate, the Haffah hospital in Ladhiqiyah, and the Assad and Furat hospitals in Dayr al-Zawr governorate.

2. Number of health centres damaged:

A total of 132 health centres have been damaged, of which 30 have been put out of service; 18 in the past six weeks, as follows:

(a) Qunaytirah governorate: the natural childbirth centre in Al-Hajar Al-Aswad, the Al-Hajar Al-Aswad centre, the Sabinah centre, the fourth health district centre and the health district clinic;

(b) Dayr al-Zawr governorate: the Ayyash health centre, the general clinics, the health institute, the natural childbirth centre and the fourth health district centre;

(c) Ladhiqiyah governorate: the Haffah centre;

(d) Homs governorate: the Jubb al-Jandali centre, the Bayyadah general clinics, the Talbisah general clinics, the Bab al-Durayb general clinics, the Khalidiyah centre, the Salamah centre, the Qusayr general clinics, the Bab al-Durayb centre, the Dab'ah centre, the Rastan health region centre, the Karm al-Zaytun centre, the Dayr Ba'albah north centre and the Dayr Ba'albah south centre;

(e) Damascus governorate: the Al-Qa'ah centre;

(f) Aleppo governorate: the Salahaddin centre, the Dayr Jamal centre, the Jarabulus centre and the Afrin health area centre;

(g) Number of ambulances, mobile vaccination units and hospital and health centre supply vehicles targeted and damaged: 227.

It should be noted that, all those attacks notwithstanding, the Ministry of Health is continually repairing and re-equipping the damaged sections of hospitals

and health centres and repairing ambulances, under the conditions that we have described above.

The unilateral and inhumane economic sanctions that are being imposed by certain States and regional entities have had a direct impact on the health sector, causing foreign exchange rates to rise and making it difficult to carry out currency exchanges because of the sanctions imposed on the banking sector and, in particular, on the Central Bank of Syria, making it difficult for the Ministry of Health to conclude contracts and obtain medication and medical necessities or spare parts and replacements for much of the medical equipment used in hospitals and health centres. The Syrian pharmaceutical industry, which produces some 93 per cent of all medication for the local market, is also facing difficulties, for the same reasons, in gaining access to the raw materials necessary for making medication.

The targeting of the oil sector has affected the electricity supply, causing frequent and lengthy electricity cuts in many regions and a severe fuel shortage, which has affected the equipment used to refrigerate medication and children's vaccines. Patients' lives are directly put at risk by the curtailing of medical services in certain hospitals and health centres, and the equipment needed for critical patient care is rendered inoperable by of lack of fuel.

Furthermore, as part of the economic siege, the European Investment Bank has withdrawn funding for health-care projects that were being carried out or were in the course of preparation. In particular, work has been halted on eight hospitals in various governorates, the central medical research centre and a project for the development and modernization of the health sector in Syria.

We should also like to note that 25 pharmaceutical factories in the governorates of Homs, Aleppo and Rif Dimashq have been forced to completely cease production of local medications because they and their staff have been directly targeted by the armed groups.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council and of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 (a), 19 and 69.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/66/883–S/2012/613

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Security Council

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10 August 2012

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General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 35
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 9 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith statements of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia dated 7 and 8 August 2012 on the fourth anniversary of the 2008 August war and an interview by the Russian President (see annexes I and II).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes issued as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex I to the identical letters dated 9 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the fourth anniversary of the 2008 August war

Four years ago, on 7 August 2008, Russian troops made an incursion into Georgia's sovereign territory and, in flagrant violation of universally recognized norms and principles of international law, carried out direct military aggression against Georgia.

On 12 August 2008, a six-point ceasefire agreement was signed. The Russian Federation, however, continues to flout its obligation to withdraw its forces to their pre-war positions as set out in this agreement.

The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation remain in Georgia and occupy 20 per cent of the country's territory. Russia has proceeded to recognize the regimes created with its political support and military backing, both in Abkhazia and in the Tskhinvali region. Under the pretence of concluding an inter-State agreement with these entities created through ethnic cleansing, Russia has set up two military bases on the territory of Georgia and has deployed more than 10,000 servicemen thereto. The ongoing build-up of offensive military capabilities in these bases includes the deployment of state-of-the-art command and control systems, tanks and rocket-propelled artillery, in addition to the training of assault and special operations troops.

Contrary to the provisions of the ceasefire agreement, Russia openly opposes the establishment of international security and stability mechanisms in the territories under occupation. At the same time, Russia continuously poses obstacles to the Geneva International Discussions, which were designed with two aims in mind: developing international security arrangements and ensuring the safe and dignified return of displaced persons.

Georgia's friends did not leave the country alone, neither during the 2008 war, nor afterwards, to face the existential challenge. The efforts of allies helped to check the progress of the Russian troops in August 2008. Following the war, friendly countries have rendered considerable assistance to Georgia in restoring economic stability and repairing damaged infrastructure.

Georgia is especially grateful to every State that has contributed personnel and helped to deploy the European Union Monitoring Mission within the shortest possible time after the conflict. The occupation regime impedes the access of the Mission to the occupied territories. Mission members, however, contribute significantly to everyday stability by reducing the space for military or political provocations. It is to be hoped that artificial obstacles recently created by Moscow and by the Sokhumi proxy regime to the participation of the Mission in the Gali Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism will be overcome and that the Mission will be allowed to carry out its mandated tasks.

Despite grave challenges, Georgia stands firmly on course towards the family of European nations. Our goal is to build a democratic State based upon liberal

values and to create a stable, secure and just environment for every person living in Georgia. Concrete steps have been taken in recent years to build closer ties with the European Union — an association agreement, visa simplification dialogue and deep and comprehensive free trade agreements are currently being negotiated. On the fourth anniversary of the war, Georgia remains committed to making a special contribution to the strengthening of international security in the region and worldwide. Our soldiers help to maintain security in Afghanistan. Georgia's presence in the United Nations and European Union civilian and police missions is set to increase in the years to come. Georgia actively shares its experience in achieving reforms with all interested States. Georgia shares its best practices in tackling corruption, in improving the quality of public services and in making the transition from being a consumer to becoming a provider of security.

The Government of Georgia adopted an engagement strategy in the aftermath of the 2008 war, the main aim of which is to restore confidence through day-to-day relations with people living in the occupied territories and to offer them opportunities for economic and social development. By implementing this strategy, we are extending the hand of friendship to our Abkhaz and Ossetian compatriots and are expressing our wish to set aside past disagreements, while taking active and pragmatic steps towards enabling the communities divided by the new Berlin Wall of the occupation line to reengage and to look once more with confidence at each other and towards the shared future.

Despite the aggression of 2008, our country maintains a friendly approach to Russian citizens. The economic investments of Russian companies active in Georgia are protected. Georgia unilaterally abolished visa requirements, first for the residents of the neighbouring North Caucasus and subsequently for all citizens of the Russian Federation. This has given a new impetus to tourism and has done much to improve people-to-people relations. Air and land traffic between Georgia and Russia has effectively been restored. Georgia has on more than one occasion expressed its readiness to negotiate with Russia on all outstanding issues at any level. Unfortunately, Russia has not reciprocated.

Georgia maintains a constructive position during the Geneva International Discussions. Georgia unilaterally pledged not to use force to resolve the conflict, while Moscow has yet to reciprocate. During the upcoming rounds of the Discussions, we hope that Russia will take heed of the calls by the European Union and undertake a similar binding commitment on non-use of force towards Georgia. Georgia will continue to demonstrate restraint and pragmatism in measures to address the concrete problems of those living in the occupied territories. However, red lines are firmly drawn at questioning Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

On the fourth anniversary of the 2008 war, we reiterate that our goal is to resolve the conflict peacefully rather than to create a new frozen conflict on Georgian territory. Every person living within the borders of our country deserves the right to develop his or her own potential in dignity to benefit from the successes of our country, while being free from fear.

In implementing this vision, we need close relations of partnership with the countries of the region, with members of the Euro-Atlantic family and with international organizations. We rely upon the support of our partners in ensuring

sustainable peace and security in the region. For its part, Georgia is ready to play an active part in strengthening international peace and security.

On the fourth anniversary of the war, Georgia is confidently looking towards the future, while striving to establish itself firmly among the free nations of the world.

Annex II to the identical letters dated 9 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on an interview by the Russian President

Earlier today, Russian President Vladimir Putin acknowledged that, as early as 2006, Russia had developed a plan to invade Georgia. This admission contradicts Russia's earlier assertions that its 2008 military attack was in response to a surprise attack from Georgia and that its invasion was meant to prevent a genocide and protect Russian citizens. It also underscores the premeditated nature of the invasion and highlights Moscow's utter disregard for international law. President Putin, who was Prime Minister at the time, also revealed that Moscow had been training militias of the Tskhinvali regime to participate in the invasion.

"There was a plan, it's no secret in my opinion", Putin said at the Kremlin in televised remarks to Russian media representatives. "It's within the framework of this plan that the Russian side acted. It was prepared by the General Staff at the end of 2006 or the beginning of 2007. It was approved by me, agreed with me." Moreover, he said that within the framework of that plan South Ossetian militiamen had been trained by Russian military specialists, adding that the men had proved very helpful during the conflict.

President Putin's open admission of the long-term, premeditated nature of the 2008 invasion offers critical insight into the conflict. His statements confirm Georgia's long-standing position that Russia's armed incursion into Georgia in August 2008 constituted a premeditated act of aggression against a sovereign nation.

They also echo a statement made in November 2011 by the then President, Dmitry Medvedev, that the military aggression was intended to counter Georgia's North Atlantic Treaty Organization ambitions and thus our country's sovereign choice to integrate into the Euro-Atlantic community. "We have simply calmed some of our neighbours down by showing them that they should behave correctly in respect of Russia and in respect of neighbouring small States", he said in Rostov-na-Donu. "And for some of our partners, including for the North Atlantic Alliance, it was a signal that, before taking a decision about expansion of the Alliance, one should at first think about the geopolitical stability. I deem these [issues] to be the major lessons of those developments in 2008."

President Putin also admitted that Russia trained militias of the Tskhinvali regime to fight Georgia's Armed Forces, a fact that highlights that Russia had for years been flouting its obligations as a supposed peacekeeper in Tskhinvali. These actions directly contravened Russia's commitments in various peace agreements, while blatantly violating Georgia's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

On the basis of today's statement, the Government of Georgia calls upon the international community to continue to pressure Russia to withdraw its occupying forces from Georgia and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours.

This is especially critical given that Russia is continuing its military build-up in the occupied territories and is engaging in hostile rhetoric. This poses a grave and present security threat to Georgia. The international community should demand that Russia pledge not to use force against Georgia and should establish international security arrangements in these occupied Georgian territories.

United Nations A/66/884

General Assembly

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Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 45
Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

Letter dated 13 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship condemning the unilateral military activities carried out by the United Kingdom in July, including the launching of missiles from the Malvinas Islands (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 45, concerning the question of the Malvinas Islands.

(*Signed*) Mateo **Estreme**
Minister and Chargé d'affaires a.i.

12-46714 (E) 220812 220812

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Annex to the letter dated 13 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

7 August 2012

I have the honour to write to you regarding a matter of great sensitivity not only for my country, but for the entire region: the question of the Malvinas Islands. Once again I take advantage of your firm commitment to international peace and security to condemn the United Kingdom's unilateral military activities in the South Atlantic, which can only be understood as a further hostile act and a provocation directed by a military power against a peaceful region.

Argentina has no doubt about its sovereignty rights over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which have now been occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for almost 180 years and are the subject of a sovereignty dispute. The United Nations has recognized this dispute through many resolutions, in which the parties were urged to solve it by resuming negotiations. The United Kingdom, however, refuses to discuss this issue with the Argentine Republic.

The situation in the South Atlantic has deteriorated as a result of the United Kingdom's constant unilateral actions; in July, it again conducted military exercises, including the launching of missiles from the Malvinas Islands, in the disputed area. In October 2010, the Argentine Government strongly protested to the United Kingdom and the competent maritime safety bodies and rejected the conduct of military exercises in the disputed area as an unacceptable provocation.

In addition to the actions described above, the United Kingdom periodically sends warships, some of them with nuclear capabilities, to "patrol" the South Atlantic (at this very moment, the destroyer *HMS Dauntless* is on its way to the Malvinas Islands); large numbers of military personnel are deployed on the Malvinas Islands; and, in early 2012, a media event surrounded the deployment to the Malvinas Islands of the second person in the line of succession to the British throne, in his capacity as a senior officer of the British Army, to perform air and sea exercises.

In this connection, Argentina wishes to remind you of the report that was hand delivered to you on 10 February 2012, in which you were alerted to the United Kingdom's increasing militarization of the South Atlantic, which is creating unnecessary tension and constitutes an affront to the entire region as reflected in the many statements issued by the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Rio Group, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and others.

Once again, the Argentine Government reiterates its strong support for your continued good offices and gratefully acknowledges your valuable contribution in that regard. In this context, it wishes to state that the United Kingdom's latest military actions in the South Atlantic demonstrate even more clearly the urgent need for the United Kingdom to heed the exhortations deriving from your mandate and to fulfil its obligation, as a Member State of the United Nations, to resolve disputes peacefully in accordance with the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions.

Argentina again reiterates its continued willingness to negotiate in accordance with United Nations provisions and requests that this letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Hector **Timerman**
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship

United Nations A/66/885–S/2012/649

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General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 35
Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 16 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia dated 15 August 2012, regarding the decision of the occupation regime in Georgia's Tskhinvali region to destroy the remainders of the ethnically cleansed Georgian villages (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex issued as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35 and as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alexander **Lomaia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

12-46734 (E) 220812

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Annex to the identical letters dated 16 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia regarding the decision of the occupation regime in Tskhinvali to destroy the remainders of the ethnically cleansed Georgian villages

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs directs the attention of the international community to the media reports concerning the statement of the leader of the occupation regime in Tskhinvali of the intention to tear down the villages to the north of Tskhinvali (among them Kurta, Kekhvi, Achabeti and Tamarasheni). These predominantly Georgian villages were ethnically cleansed, torched and partially destroyed during the August 2008 war with the Russian Federation by the South Ossetian militias under the protection and with the direct aid of the invading armed forces of the Russian Federation. This destruction has been documented by many international observers, including the fact-finding mission of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) in late 2008.

In his statement, the leader of the occupation regime, Mr. Leonid Tibilov, has ordered the obliteration of the remaining signs of habitation and the very memory of the villages, stating "These areas will not be used for habitation, there is no point in keeping their names; they will no longer exist as inhabited areas ... These houses are not destroyed yet, but we are planning to put these territories, where the ruins are, under a specific legal regime, so that there are no questions asked tomorrow or the day after. We are planning to cleanse these villages. These ruins don't look very good. We will plan to build some kind of enterprises there".

The statement is the latest in the chain of official declarations by the occupation regime during and after the 2008 war that contain direct admissions of intent to ethnically cleanse the region. On 15 August 2008, the ex-leader of the occupation regime, Eduard Kokoity, stated that militias "have levelled everything" in Georgian villages and are "not planning to allow returns". In December 2010 the occupation regime issued a decree that changed the legal status of property in the predominantly ethnic Georgian Akhalgori district, allowing for its appropriation.

Under international law, all responsibility for ethnic cleansing, as well as for acts that pursue an objective of making it irreversible, rests with the Russian Federation. The Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, together with Abkhazia, remain under Russia's illegal military occupation and are governed by the occupation regime.

The Ministry calls on the co-chairs of the Geneva international discussions and the international organizations involved in the Geneva international discussions to urgently raise this issue in their contacts with Moscow in order to seek prompt reversal of the decision.

Tbilisi, 15 August 2012

United Nations A/66/886

General Assembly

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Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 70 (a)
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Letter dated 30 July 2012 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to refer to General Assembly resolution 60/124, in which the Assembly established the Advisory Group for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to advise me on its use and impact.

In accordance with the provisions of paragraph 21 of that resolution, I have the honour to transmit herewith a note of the meeting of the CERF Advisory Group, which took place in Geneva on 29 and 30 May 2012 (see annex).

As summarized in that note, the Advisory Group expressed appreciation for the continuing improvements in the performance and management of the Fund. The Group considered a number of policy issues, including the use of the 3 per cent programme support costs retained at Headquarters; progress made since the last meeting of the Advisory Group in implementing the management matrix in response to the five-year evaluation; the development by the CERF secretariat of a risk assessment matrix; and the Fund's performance and accountability framework.

The Group met resident/humanitarian coordinators from Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Ethiopia to discuss their roles in coordinating the response of the humanitarian community to sudden onset disasters in their respective countries and, in particular, how they managed the funds disbursed by the Response Fund at the country level. The Advisory Group also met with members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to discuss the subgranting and the speed of onward disbursement of CERF funds from United Nations agencies and the International Organization for Migration to implementing partners.

I would be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the Member States and the observer missions.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

12-46721 (E) 220812

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Annex

Note to the Secretary-General on the meeting of the Central Emergency Response Fund Advisory Group (29 and 30 May 2012)

Recommendations and conclusions

1. The Advisory Group of the Central Emergency Response Fund was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 60/124 to advise the Secretary-General, through the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, on the use and impact of the Fund. The Advisory Group's first meeting for 2012 was held in Geneva on 29 and 30 May, with 12 members participating. The Chair of the Advisory Group, Mikael Lindvall (Sweden), presided over the meeting.

2. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator provided an update on the use and management of the Fund during the first five months of 2012. She also briefed the Group on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee transformative agenda. The Group met with the resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators from Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Ethiopia to discuss their roles in coordinating the humanitarian community's response to sudden onset disasters and, in particular, how they managed CERF funds at the country level. The Group considered policy issues, including the level of programme support costs taken by recipient agencies and implementing partners, funding for internally displaced people and refugees in chronic conflicts, the quality of reporting by resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators, the development by the secretariat of the Fund of a risk assessment matrix, the CERF performance and accountability framework, and current partnerships with the evaluation departments of recipient agencies. In accordance with past practice, the Advisory Group met with partners from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. The meeting with the Standing Committee focused, inter alia, on the subgranting and the speed of onward disbursement of funds from United Nations agencies and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to implementing partners.

3. Further to those discussions, the Group would like to offer the following findings and recommendations.

Management

4. The Advisory Group expressed its appreciation to the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the CERF secretariat for the use of the funding over the preceding period, especially in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, and for the continued professional management of the Fund. The Group acknowledged that the secretariat was on track with the activities in the management response plan related to the five-year evaluation, and requested that the secretariat provide a new update at the fall 2012 meeting.

5. Members acknowledged that resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators play a key role in the management of the Fund and called on the secretariat to support them and the humanitarian country teams in prioritizing activities and funding allocations, in particular by providing funds earlier in a response. The Advisory Group supported the recommendation of the three resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators that, as often as possible, independent cluster leads should be appointed to avoid conflicts of interest in the prioritization of funding. On

the transformative agenda, the members emphasized that a reasonable balance must be found, as the agenda was rolled out, between the empowerment of resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators and the extent to which they were held accountable. At the same time, the accountability of the agencies to the resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators for the use of CERF funds needed to be strengthened. Finally, the members of the Advisory Group also expressed support for the approach taken in allocating funds from the underfunded window in Ethiopia.

6. The Advisory Group acknowledged that improvements had been made in reporting by resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators since their previous meeting, but more work was still required. The members requested that, once the analysis of the reporting for 2012 had been finalized, the information be shared with them. The Group also requested a more in-depth discussion of that issue at their next meeting and asked the secretariat of the Fund to continue to work closely with the United Nations agencies and IOM to ensure high quality reporting.

7. The members reviewed the first draft of the CERF risk assessment matrix. They suggested that the draft should be shared for comment with agencies and other stakeholders. The Group has asked the secretariat to return to the fall 2012 meeting with an updated version.

8. On the question of programme support costs, the Advisory Group discussed the overall programme support costs of 10 per cent (3 per cent retained at Headquarters for the management of the Fund and 7 per cent passed on to agencies), with particular emphasis on the issue of the informal 60/40 split — whereby 60 per cent of the portion retained at Headquarters is used by the Controller and 40 per cent is allotted to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for the costs associated with the management of the Fund. The Group expressed concern regarding the justification for the split and the nature of the expenditures of the 60 per cent, and requested a review of the division of the programme support costs, and the use of the Controller's 60 per cent portion.

9. The Group requested the secretariat to ensure that the agencies members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee focus specifically on the Fund in evaluations of their work, or at least to ensure that the Fund is taken adequately into account when recipient agencies carry out relevant and related evaluations.

10. For the fall 2012 meeting, the Advisory Group requested the Fund secretariat to provide an update on the evaluation of the underfunded emergency window, and the outcome of the performance and accountability framework review of situations in the Philippines, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, and the refugee crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. The Advisory Group also intends to discuss the review of indicators in the performance and accountability framework.

11. The Advisory Group was encouraged by the feedback received from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on efforts to improve the speed of disbursements of funds to implementing partners and expressed their support for the improvements made so far. The Advisory Group asked the Fund secretariat to continue to closely monitor and report on timeliness data.

Administrative matters

12. During the meeting, the members of the Advisory Group selected Milton Rondo Filho (Brazil) as the Vice-Chair. The Advisory Group expressed their appreciation and thanks to the outgoing Vice-Chair, Silvano Langa (Mozambique) and the other board members who are completing their terms.

13. The next meeting of the CERF Advisory Group is to take place in Geneva in October 2012.

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General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 36
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 14 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a complaint about Israeli enemy forces, which on 16 July 2012 undertook engineering work on the Blue Line (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as an official document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

12-46890 (E) 220812 230812

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Annex to the identical letters dated 14 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On 16 July 2012, at approximately 0400 hours, the Israeli enemy undertook engineering work on the Blue Line in the vicinity of Mazra'at Fashkul, at coordinates Q:747865-N:684739. A United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon patrol was close to the place in which the hostile work was being undertaken. The Israeli enemy finished work at 0535 hours, and it later became clear that they had dug a trench and erected an earthen berm at coordinates Q:747617-N:684836, and removed a blue-painted stone that had indicated the position of the Blue Line.

Such conduct indicates the following:

The aim of the engineering work undertaken by the Israeli enemy was to block the paved road that leads to the Lebanese side of the Blue Line by means of the trench and the earthen berm (10m x 10m x 5m).

All the engineering work undertaken by the Israeli enemy is 23 metres beyond the Blue Line, on the Lebanese side, and therefore a violation of the Line.

The area in which the hostile work was undertaken was in the vicinity of Mazra'at Fashkul, in the occupied Shab'a Farms. In 2000, Lebanon expressed an objection with regard to the Blue Line in that area.

This breach constitutes a flagrant violation of Lebanese sovereignty, international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and poses a threat to international peace and security.

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Sixty-sixth session
Agenda items 17 (a), 19 and 109

Macroeconomic policy questions: international trade and development

Sustainable development

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 15 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a summary of the losses and damages sustained by the Ministry of Economy of the Syrian Arab Republic as a result of the acts of the armed terrorist groups committed against the Ministry's employees, facilities and vehicles, since the beginning of the crisis in Syria until 3 June 2012 (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly under agenda items 19, 17 (a) and 109.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 15 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Armed terrorist groups have killed nine Ministry employees and abducted six others. Three of the abducted employees were released, but the fate of the three others remains unknown. Eleven employees, including the guards of facilities belonging to the Ministry, were attacked, beaten and fired on and had their identity cards stolen.

Armed terrorist groups have also attacked and ransacked 33 buildings belonging to the Ministry. Vehicles belonging to the Ministry were subjected to various forms of attack, including gunfire and the firing of shells, or stolen. In many instances, the stolen vehicles were fully loaded with food, such as rice, flour and imported wheat or citrus fruits, that was destined for market. Some 72 Ministry vehicles were stolen and another 97 were destroyed, resulting in damages valued at 131,408,818 Syrian pounds, which is equivalent to $3 million.

It is worth mentioning that of the institutions concerned with meeting the basic nutritional needs of the Syrian people, those responsible for wheat products were most affected by the terrorist operations. The General Bakeries Company alone was attacked on five occasions, shutting down the I'zaz bakery and the Najmah mill in Homs. Salibah bakery No. 2 in Ladhiqiyah was burned, the Sinjar silo was subjected to an armed attack and the Zahra' mill in Homs was attacked with bombs and mortars. Two women and a guard who work for the Homs bakery were abducted. The losses in this sector alone amounted to 40 million Syrian pounds, while the losses of the General Establishment for Storage and Marketing amounted to 38 million Syrian pounds. This clearly demonstrates that the goal of the terrorists and mercenaries, who are conducting such operations with funding and support from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey, is to destroy Syria and everything that the Syrian people have built over decades, with a view to putting the country under pressure. This clearly confirms the falsehood of the assertion that what is happening is aimed at ensuring that the demands of the people are met.

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Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 34
Prevention of armed conflict

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 66/253 B on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 66/253 B of 3 August 2012, in which the Secretary-General was requested to report to the Assembly, within 15 days, on the implementation of the resolution. The report provides an update on the implementation of the political, security, humanitarian and human rights aspects of the resolution during the period from 3 to 17 August.

2. The overall situation in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to deteriorate during the reporting period, with the most intense fighting seen to date taking place in Aleppo. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and elements of the armed opposition continued to engage in violent confrontation. The Government remained convinced that it would be able to succeed militarily against the opposition and refused to engage in any political dialogue or move forward with the promised implementation of the six-point plan unless the opposition lay down arms. The armed opposition was equally convinced that its military efforts would succeed in toppling the leadership of the country and refused to accept the Government's preconditions for dialogue. Temporary, localized reductions in troop strengths were seen in some areas although, in others, the conflict intensified. Armed opposition elements launched offensives in Aleppo and Damascus, while government forces maintained their use of heavy weapons in and around population centres and significantly increased the use of fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft in their operations.

3. The humanitarian situation remained dire and continued to deteriorate as fighting in and around urban centres increased. The estimated number of internally displaced persons surpassed 1 million. As at 17 August, more than 170,000 Syrians had sought refuge across international borders. Such levels of internal and international displacement, against a backdrop of destruction of civilian infrastructure and residences in areas of origin, posed significant problems for many

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communities across the country. Both Government and opposition groups continued to commit gross human rights violations.

4. International diplomatic efforts continued to lack unity and cohesion, despite some attempts to address the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic over the past few weeks. The Government of the Republic of Iran held a meeting of 30 nations on 9 August, and Saudi Arabia hosted a summit meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on 14 and 15 August.

II. Update on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 66/253 B

5. During the reporting period, I continued to engage Member States and regional organizations in providing support for the efforts of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States to Syria to reach a political solution to the Syrian crisis. At the same time, the Office of the Joint Special Envoy and the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (UNSMIS) continued to engage in consultations with members of the Government and members of the opposition, in order to elicit views on possible arrangements to underpin a peaceful political transition.

6. In the past few weeks, the political and armed opposition made several attempts to put forward visions for a transition in the Syrian Arab Republic, including a proposal by some groups to establish a transitional government or a government in exile. However, those plans lacked the necessary broad consensus among the various groups inside and outside the country, underlining the opposition's difficulties in agreeing on an approach to a transitional process at this stage. The Government also attempted to begin a political process through the appointment of a Minister for National Reconciliation to act as an empowered interlocutor. However, the Minister did not find universal acceptance among the opposition.

7. Ultimately, these efforts to implement an inclusive, Syrian-led political transition were overcome by the dramatic change in the military situation on the ground, which shifted the focus of both parties away from the kind of political transition envisaged in the Geneva communiqué of 30 June and the six-point plan endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 2042 (2012). Events on the ground demonstrated that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic remained convinced of its ability to defeat the opposition militarily. The Government refused to make the departure of President Assad a precondition for political dialogue and declined to engage in such a dialogue until after the culmination of the military operation in Aleppo. For its part, the Syrian opposition seemed to believe that the Government had begun a process of collapse, facing additional high-level defections and a better coordinated opposition. Convinced that its military efforts would succeed in toppling the current Syrian leadership, the armed opposition refused to accept the Government's preconditions for dialogue and increased its use of violence, including in major cities, as a means to an end to the conflict.

8. I am particularly concerned by reports that outside parties are participating in providing support, fuelling each side's reliance on violence. If these reports are true, those providing weaponry to the two sides are contributing directly to the

deterioration of the situation on the ground. In some cases, reports of arms shipments suggest violations of Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. I call on all Member States with influence over the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic or opposition forces to promote a peaceful resolution rather than the use of force.

9. During the reporting period, UNSMIS sought to obtain confirmation of the conditions set out in Security Council resolution 2059 (2012), while continuing to seek all opportunities for dialogue in support of the Joint Special Envoy's six-point plan. The cessation of the use of heavy weapons and of armed violence by all sides, as set out in the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, the Joint Special Envoy's six-point plan and the communiqué of the Action Group, was not achieved. While there were temporary, localized reductions in the use of heavy weapons and the level of violence, and prospects for limited humanitarian pauses increased in Homs, in other areas of the country, particularly in Aleppo, the conflict intensified. The use of heavy weapons continued, while troop withdrawals, where seen, were assessed by UNSMIS to be tactics to redirect forces in preparation for or in response to confrontations elsewhere. Opposition armed groups were also reported to have moved their forces in order to initiate or sustain operations. Two such instances were the armed opposition-initiated offensives in the cities of Damascus and Aleppo, which were met by forceful Government retaliatory operations, involving the use of heavy weapons in densely populated areas.

10. UNSMIS observed a situation of variable but continuing conflict, as well as the ongoing use of artillery, tanks, helicopters and other aircraft in Deir-ez-Zor, Homs, Rif Damascus and Aleppo. Between 3 and 17 August, rotary wing aircraft were observed firing into Aleppo and Deir-ez-Zor on four occasions, while fixed-wing aircraft were seen firing in Homs on 9 August. The reporting period was marked by the ongoing and sustained military ground operations undertaken in Aleppo, and shelling was observed in other locations on a regular but intermittent basis, showing no indication of sustained cessation of the use of heavy weapons. Small arms clashes initiated by both sides were also constant across the areas observed by UNSMIS. The use of improvised explosive devices by the armed opposition also continued, including an alleged attack on a Syrian television station on 6 August in Damascus and an explosion on 15 August at a military installation in the vicinity of the UNSMIS headquarters, for which the opposition claimed responsibility.

11. In the light of emerging concerns about the threat of the use and transfer of chemical or biological weapons, on 27 July, I sent a letter to President Assad, in which I voiced my own grave concerns and appealed to the President to refrain from using any such weapons under any circumstances. I emphasized the fundamental responsibility of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to ensure the safety and security of any stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons. On 31 July, I received a response from the Deputy Prime Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, which noted that the country was party to and abided by the Geneva Protocol (of 17 June 1925) for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare.

12. I am also concerned about the potential for the conflict to negatively affect the stability of Syria's neighbours. In that regard, alarming reports of hostage-taking

and retaliatory kidnappings in the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon have added to social and regional tensions. The six-point plan demands the release of persons unjustly detained. It is my firm conviction that all parties must release persons detained against their will and held without due process. Hostage-taking by any party is unacceptable. The human rights of civilians must be scrupulously protected.

13. I have also seen credible reports of explosives being smuggled from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon, allegedly with the purpose of undermining Lebanon's stability, and of weapons being smuggled into the Syrian Arab Republic, which contributes to further militarization of the conflict. I have long expressed concern about the smuggling of weapons in either direction across the Lebanese-Syrian border, which is a violation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). I call on all parties to take measures to halt this dangerous and illegal trade.

14. The humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic deteriorated even more significantly during the reporting period. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator visited the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon from 13 to 16 August to assess the humanitarian situation and to discuss ways to increase humanitarian assistance to those in need. The number of people affected by the conflict has more than doubled since the initial humanitarian assessment in March 2012. At the time of writing, United Nations agencies estimated that over 2.5 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic, including 1.2 million internally displaced persons. The use of heavy weapons and artillery in highly populated areas was having a serious impact on civilians. Although the United Nations was unable to confirm exact numbers, there were widespread reports of civilians killed and injured in the fighting. Civilians who had been displaced and persons living in conflict zones had little or no access to essential services, including health care and education. Fewer than 56 per cent of primary health facilities and 50 per cent of hospitals were assessed as still fully functional. Some health facilities were reportedly occupied or targeted by the parties to the conflict. Socioeconomic conditions continued to deteriorate, with food prices tripling in some areas. Serious shortages of fuel and essential medicines were also reported.

15. The capacity of host communities in the Syrian Arab Republic to support persons who had fled from violence was exhausted. As a result, many internally displaced persons sought shelter in schools, mosques and other public buildings, which were ill-equipped to host them. As at 7 August, the Ministry of Education reported that internally displaced persons were being sheltered in 271 schools across 12 of the country's 14 governorates, and close to 9,000 had sought shelter in 17 United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools. They lacked water and adequate sanitation services and were in urgent need of non-food items, food and health care. Palestinian and Iraqi refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic were increasingly affected. UNRWA estimated that up to 385,000 Palestinian refugees — about 80 per cent of the Palestinian refugees registered in the Syrian Arab Republic — had been affected.

16. A growing number of Syrians sought refuge in neighbouring countries. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there were more than 170,000 refugees registered as at 17 August, spread across Iraq (15,096), Jordan (46,898), Lebanon (46,672) and Turkey (61,450). According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), three quarters of the

refugees were women and children. Host Governments and UNHCR were providing assistance to registered refugees. In addition, it was believed that a significant number of Syrians had crossed to neighbouring countries without registering as refugees and were staying with relatives or in private accommodation.

17. Heightened insecurity continued to impede humanitarian operations inside Syrian Arab Republic. In Aleppo, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent reported that it had had to suspend most of its activities owing to the dangers facing its workers on the ground. It was not possible to ensure the safety and security of personnel involved in humanitarian assistance. The World Food Programme (WFP), which planned to provide food assistance to 850,000 people in July, was unable to reach its target owing to delays in distribution caused by violence. In Dera'a, most of UNRWA's operations were suspended.

18. Underfunding remained another significant challenge faced by humanitarian organizations. As at 17 August, the $180 million humanitarian response plan for the Syrian Arab Republic was 45 per cent funded, with the water, sanitation and hygiene sector only 20 per cent funded and health care only 30 per cent funded. The plan was being revised to reflect an increase in the number of individuals targeted for humanitarian assistance from the original target of 1 million people to 2.5 million people. The $193 million Revised Syria Regional Response Plan was only 33 per cent funded. The Central Emergency Response Fund had disbursed $32.6 million as at 17 August for the response in Syrian Arab Republic and neighbouring countries.

19. Despite these challenges, humanitarian organizations scaled up their response in both government and opposition-held areas. WFP has quadrupled the number of people receiving food assistance since March 2012. As at 17 August, non-food items had been provided to more than 270,000 people and the World Health Organization (WHO) had given health kits to the Ministry of Health and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to cover the health needs of 700,000 people in 2012. Water and sanitation services were being provided for internally displaced persons sites and communities, with 300,000 people assisted in Homs as at 17 August.

20. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to receive credible reports that both Government and armed opposition forces were acting in breach of international human rights and humanitarian law. Arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and extrajudicial executions by government forces continued to be reported. Restrictions on access to health care, attacks on hospitals, and military occupation of health facilities or detention and arrest of medical personnel by Government forces continued to aggravate the humanitarian situation. At the same time, there were increasing reports of abductions, torture and ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings and summary executions of captured Government forces, pro-Government militia and civilians by armed opposition groups. A recent incident was the abduction of four journalists of a pro-Government television station, one of whom was killed and the rest released, and the killing of another journalist working for a State-run television station by the Free Syrian Army on 10 and 11 August, respectively. OHCHR also received reports that armed opposition groups were deploying snipers who targeted civilians. Reports that armed opposition groups were taking on judicial functions through the so-called "Religious Justice Council" and handing down death sentences was of deep concern. Both parties to the conflict violated the rights of children. In OHCHR's estimation, the serious

violations of international humanitarian law committed by Government and armed opposition forces may amount to war crimes.

21. The overall escalation in hostilities restricted the ability of UNSMIS to implement the full scope of its mandated responsibilities and necessitated the temporary withdrawal of half of its original military observer contingent, with a further reduction to 100 observers between 10 and 13 August. In that context, UNSMIS was unable to verify information reported on the parties' violations of human rights, including acts of sexual violence, continued arbitrary detentions and alleged summary executions. The mission nevertheless sought to assess the impact of the conflict on civilians where possible, conducting visits to observe the status and conditions of medical facilities in some areas, and visiting areas with concentrations of internally displaced persons. UNSMIS witnessed shortages of medical supplies at hospitals and difficult conditions at internally displaced persons camps, including a lack of food and basic services. It also visited the Homs prison in order to assess the situation after violence at the site. With the exception of Homs, the mission has had only limited access to current detainees and has had difficulty engaging with released detainees owing to the security situation.

22. Requests for visits to the Syrian Arab Republic by special procedures mandate-holders of the Human Rights Council, including the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons remained pending. However, on 3 August, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic responded to a request for a visit by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and noted that it viewed positively his proposal to visit the country to offer recommendations within his mandate.

23. Despite the visit of the Chair of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic to Damascus from 23 to 25 June to discuss the commission's work with the Syrian authorities, the commission was not granted access to the country to fulfil its mandate. Despite access limitations, the commission is to present its report, published on 15 August (A/HRC/21/50), at the twenty-first session of the Human Rights Council in September 2012. A confidential list of individuals and units believed to be responsible for crimes against humanity, breaches of international humanitarian law and gross human rights violations will be provided to the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the close of the commission's current mandate in September.

III. Conclusions

24. The United Nations remains committed to assisting the Syrian people in building a Syrian-led alternative to the use of force and in determining a path, backed by united international support, to come to the negotiating table and move towards a democratic, plural political system, with equal rights for all. The resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly continue to provide the basis for the efforts of the Joint Special Envoy to focus on a political transition, while also working towards the achievement of a cessation of violence in the Syrian Arab Republic through the full implementation of the six-point plan.

25. Moving forward, I will continue to work with all parties to bring about an early resolution of the conflict and an end to violence. Within the constraints

imposed by the conditions on the ground, the United Nations country team will continue its important work in helping to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people and the United Nations humanitarian agencies will remain active. The United Nations cannot discontinue its support and assistance in helping the Syrian people find an end to the crisis. Rather, we must adapt to the situation while pursuing our efforts to support the Syrians in taking the steps that they identify towards a negotiated and inclusive political settlement.

26. Political efforts to mitigate and contain the worst effects of the conflict are a priority, while we also work to ultimately help the parties to resolve the crisis. One of the greatest risks is a descent into a full-scale civil war. United Nations engagement with all sectors of Syrian society, including women and young people, to develop channels of communication across communal divides and, potentially, build areas of consensus, is essential for finding ways to protect communities from the worst effects of a civil war. This should be considered one of the most urgent priorities of the United Nations.

27. It is our responsibility to do all we can to stop the violence among the Syrian people and to assist them in reconciling their differences so that they can build a future that meets their legitimate aspirations. While we mobilize the United Nations system to support the people of the Syrian Arab Republic, we must remind the parties and, above all, the Government, that they have the primary responsibility for resolving the crisis that is currently devastating their country.

28. All parties to the conflict are conducting military operations within heavily populated areas with blatant disregard for their obligations under international humanitarian law. Specifically, the Syrian authorities did not make the first step in the cessation of violence. While the Government has the primary responsibility to protect civilians, the armed opposition also has legally binding obligations under international law in that regard. Forces deployed in populated areas must not locate military objectives in or around population centres and must ensure that any use of force is in line with the principles of proportionality and distinction. Both parties have an obligation to take the necessary precautions to minimize injury and death among civilians and damage to civilian objects. All perpetrators of international crimes and other gross human rights violations, including acts of sexual violence, should be held accountable, irrespective of their affiliation.

29. I am extremely concerned about the continuing militarization of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, which has grave humanitarian consequences. I appeal to outside parties, especially the regional countries, and emphasize their responsibility to do all they can to end this trend. I call on the Security Council and the General Assembly to work in search of a common ground to help the Syrian people to end the violence and start charting a way towards an inclusive, peaceful and democratic future. I once again urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the armed opposition to abandon a military solution, cease military activities, engage in dialogue, protect civilians, and abide by their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law. I urge all parties, especially the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, to ensure full and unconditional humanitarian access, without delay, to those in need.

30. In conclusion, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Joint Special Envoy Annan, who embarked on his challenging assignment with courage and determination and sought to unite the world around key principles for ending the

suffering in the Syrian Arab Republic and charting a way towards a Syria that meets the aspirations of its people and preserves its institutions, unity and territorial integrity. The important work he has undertaken must continue. I also express my deep appreciation to the military observers and civilian staff of UNSMIS and to the United Nations country team in the Syrian Arab Republic for their dedicated work under challenging conditions.

31. In the light of Mr. Annan's decision to step down at the end of August 2012, in consultation with Secretary General Nabil Elaraby of the League of Arab States, I appointed Lakhdar Brahimi as Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria on 17 August. I appreciate Mr. Brahimi's willingness to bring his considerable talents and experience to the crucial task of ending the violence and the suffering in the Syrian Arab Republic, for which he will need, and rightly expects, the strong, clear and unified support of the international community, including the Security Council and the General Assembly. Diplomacy to promote a peaceful resolution to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic remains a top priority for the United Nations. More fighting and militarization will only exacerbate the suffering and make the path to a peaceful resolution of the crisis in accordance with the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people more difficult.

United Nations A/66/890–S/2012/661

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Agenda items 35, 39, 67 and 83

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Elimination of racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Letter dated 17 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In addition to our previous letters dated 25 April, 10 May and 20 July 2012 (A/66/783-S/2012/271, A/66/798-S/2012/313 and A/66/875-S/2012/573), I have the honour to draw your attention to the reaction of the international community to the illegal "presidential elections" held on 19 July 2012 in the occupied Daghlyq Garabagh (Nagorno-Karabakh) region of the Republic of Azerbaijan (see annex).

In their statements and communications, the international organizations and individual States voiced their unequivocal protest against the aforementioned "elections" and declared this provocative action null and void. Accordingly, it has been made clear that, against the background of continuing aggression, occupation and ethnic cleansing of the captured territories of Azerbaijan, the arranging of any kind of voting process in these territories cannot be recognized as legally valid and in no way can impose a unilateral solution.

The clearly expressed unanimity of the international community confirms that the attempts to give the ethnically constructed subordinate separatist regime set up by Armenia in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan the appearance of legitimacy are, a priori, doomed to failure. We are confident that the policy of colonization and annexation of the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan has no chance to succeed and that Armenia will be obliged to completely withdraw its armed forces from the Daghlyq Garabagh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, to denounce

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its territorial claims towards neighbouring nations, to respect international law and to establish civilized relations with all countries of the region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35, 39, 67 and 83, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Tofig **Musayev**
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex to the letter dated 17 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Reaction of the international community to the illegal "presidential elections" held on 19 July 2012 in the occupied Daghlyq Garabagh (Nagorno-Karabakh) region of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Below are excerpts from some statements and communications of international organizations and individual States.

In her statement dated 18 July 2012 regarding the "presidential elections" in Nagorno-Karabakh, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, reiterated that "the European Union does not recognize the constitutional and legal framework in which they will be held" and that "these 'elections' should not prejudice the determination of the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh in the negotiated general framework of the peaceful settlement of the conflict".[1]

The Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, expressed the organization's rejection of the so-called "presidential elections" in the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Secretary General further emphasized the organization's "continuous support to achieve a just and peaceful settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the basis of respect for the principles of territorial integrity of States and inviolability of internationally recognized borders".[2]

The Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Eamon Gilmore, stated that "the OSCE does not recognize the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh" and that "the 'presidential elections' should not exert any impact on efforts to settle the conflict in the agreed format".[3]

The Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, Ambassadors Robert Bradtke of the United States, Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, and Jacques Faure of France, in their statement dated 20 July 2012, noted that "none of their three countries, nor any other country, recognizes Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent and sovereign state". According to the Co-Chairs, "the procedures of 19 July in no way prejudge the final legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh or the outcome of the ongoing negotiations to bring a lasting and peaceful settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict".[4]

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[1] European Union, statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on Nagorno-Karabakh, Brussels, 18 July 2012, available from www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131842.pdf.

[2] "OIC rejects the so-called elections in Nagorno-Karabakh", 19 July 2012, available from www.oic-oci.org/topic_detail.asp?t_id=7041.

[3] "OSCE chairman releases statement on 'presidential elections' in Karabakh", 19 July 2012, available from www.azertag.net/en/node/982203.

[4] Statement of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, 20 July 2012, available from www.osce.org/mg/92313.

The Special Representative of the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for the Caucasus and Central Asia, James Appathurai, stated on 19 July 2012 that "NATO, like other international organizations, does not recognize so-called presidential elections held in Nagorno-Karabakh", and that "the holding of such elections does not contribute to a peaceful and lasting settlement to the conflict".[5]

In her letter of 21 May 2012 addressed to the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, Susana Malcorra, underlined that the Daghlyq Garabagh region constitutes part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, qualified the so-called "presidential elections" as fictitious and assured the Azerbaijani side that the United Nations was not involved in their conduct. The Secretary-General encouraged all sides to remain engaged in the search for a peaceful and lasting solution and expressed his hope that the negotiations could be accelerated with a view to reaching a peaceful settlement.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey stated on 18 July 2012 that "the so-called 'presidential elections' will be held on 19 July 2012 in the Azerbaijani territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, which remains under the occupation of Armenia, in total contravention of international law and contrary to the expectations of the international community". According to the position of Turkey, the "elections constitute a clear breach of the Security Council resolutions and OSCE principles" and represent "a new example of the unilateral efforts to legitimize the present unlawful situation in Nagorno-Karabakh". In that regard, while deploring this act, which violates Azerbaijan's political unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity, Turkey stated that it "will not recognize the results of these so-called 'presidential' elections, which it considers illegitimate and certainly null and void in terms of international law".[6]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, in its statement of 19 July 2012, "reaffirm[ed] the Georgian government's unequivocal support for Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity", and pointed out that it "does not recognize the so-called 'presidential elections' which were held in Nagorno-Karabakh on 19 July 2012".[7]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania stated on 19 July 2012 that it "considers the so-called presidential elections held on 19 July 2012 in the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh as deprived of legitimacy", and "reiterating its constantly asserted position of principle to the effect of not recognizing the independence of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

[5] Available from www.aznatomission.be/?/en/news/view/202/.

[6] Press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey "regarding the so-called 'presidential elections' to be held in Nagorno Karabakh", 18 July 2012, available from www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-188_-18-temmuz-2012_-yukar%C4%B1-karaba%C4%9F_da-d%C3%BCzenlenecek-s%C3%B6zde-_ba%C5%9Fkanl%C4%B1k_-se%C3%A7imleri-hk_.en.mfa.

[7] Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia "in reaction to the so-called 'presidential elections' held in Nagorno-Karabakh on the 19th of July 2012", 19 July 2012, available from www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=59&info_id=15368.

expresses confidence that this ballot will in no way prejudice the process of finding a peaceful, negotiated solution to the conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region".[8]

In its statement of 19 July 2012, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic underlined that "the Czech Republic does not recognize [the] constitutional and legal framework within which [the] elections took place". According to the statement, "the Czech Republic is of the view that these elections do not contribute to the creation of a more positive atmosphere for the solution of the frozen conflict".[9]

The Embassy of the Republic of Moldova in Azerbaijan stated on 19 July 2012 that "Moldova, along with other countries, does not recognize the so-called 'presidential elections' in Nagorno-Karabakh", and that it "supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and stands for the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict".[10]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation stated on 20 July 2012 that, as well as all other countries, Russia "do[es] not recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state" and "do[es] not consider that the results of the process of peace settlement could depend on these elections".[11]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia stated on 20 July 2012 that it "does not recognize the 'presidential elections' held in Nagorno-Karabakh on 19 July and does not recognize the results thereof". In this context, the Ministry "express[ed] concern about the lack of progress in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the escalation of incidents and the rising number of victims", and "call[ed] on all parties involved to solve the conflict through negotiations.[12]

In its statement of 20 July 2012, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary emphasized that the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict "must be achieved by peaceful and negotiated means, on the basis of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of the states concerned, as well as the respect for the rights of minority communities". The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary fully aligned itself with the statement of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, of 18 July 2012, stating that the European Union does not recognize the constitutional and legal framework in which [the 'elections' of 19 July 2012 in Nagorno-Karabakh] were held, and that "these 'elections' should not prejudice the determination of the future

[8] Press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania "on the so-called presidential elections in the Nagorno-Karabakh separatist region", 19 July 2012, available from www.mae.ro/en/node/14605.

[9] Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic "on presidential election in Nagorno Karabagh", 19 July 2012, available from www.mzv.cz/jnp/en/issues_and_press/statements/x2012_07_19_statement_of_mfa_on_presidential_election_in_nagorno_karabagh.html.

[10] Embassy of the Republic of Moldova in Azerbaijan, "The position of the Republic of Moldova regarding the so-called 'presidential elections' in Nagorno-Karabakh", available from www.azerbaidjan.mfa.md/anounsments-ro/492607/.

[11] Briefing of the Official Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, A. K. Lukashevich, "On the so-called 'presidential elections' in Nagorno-Karabakh", 20 July 2012, available from www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/690423448566620444257a44002aea68!OpenDocument.

[12] Announcement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia on Nagorno-Karabakh, 20 July 2012, available from www.am.gov.lv/en/news/press-releases/2012/july/20-1/.

status of Nagorno-Karabakh in the negotiated general framework of the peaceful settlement of the conflict".[13]

The Federal Foreign Office of Germany stated on 19 July 2012 that "the Federal Government does not recognize any Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, its representatives and elections held there" and that this constitutes the position of the European Union expressed by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton.[14]

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, in its communication dated 20 July 2012 to the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Switzerland, informed that "the Swiss Confederation respects the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders and does not recognize the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is part of the Republic of Azerbaijan".

In its statement of 20 July 2012, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia qualified the "presidential elections" held on 19 July 2012 as illegitimate and underlined that "the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States Members of the United Nations is the fundamental principle on which the international order is based". In that regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia stated that "these elections cannot prejudice the future status of the region or the ongoing negotiations on the peaceful settlement of the conflict".[15]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China stated on 21 July 2012 that "China's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue has been clear and consistent, and remains unchanged". China expressed its hope that "parties concerned can peacefully resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh issue in a way acceptable to all sides through consultation and dialogue in accordance with the universally recognized norms of international law and relevant Security Council resolutions. This not only serves the interests of all parties concerned, but also contributes to regional peace, stability and development".[16]

[13] Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary on Nagorno-Karabakh, 20 July 2012, available from www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/news/statement-of-the-ministry-of-foreign-affairs-of-hungary-on-nagorno-karabakh.

[14] The Federal Foreign Office of Germany, press conference on 20 July 2012, available from www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Mitschrift/Pressekonferenzen/2012/07/2012-07-20-regpk.html.

[15] Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, 20 July 2012, available from www.mfa.gov.rs/Srpski/Pressframe.htm.

[16] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, remarks by Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei, 21 July 2012, available from www.china-un.org/eng/fyrth/t955112.htm.

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Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly

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I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 65/315, the General Assembly decided to establish, at its sixty-sixth session, an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, open to all Member States:

(a) To identify further ways to enhance the role, the authority, the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia, by building on previous resolutions and evaluating the status of their implementation;

(b) To submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session.

2. The present report and the recommendations contained herein are submitted pursuant to that resolution.

3. During the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the President of the Assembly appointed two Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group, the Permanent Representative of the Gambia to the United Nations, Susan Waffa-Ogoo, and the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations, Alexander Lomaia.

4. Before the formal beginning of its work, the Co-Chairs of the Working Group conducted informal meetings with various Member States and representatives of a variety of political groups. During those meetings, the Co-Chairs benefited extensively from the insights and the ideas of Member States on both the substance and the technical and procedural aspects of the revitalization process.

II. Proceedings

5. The Working Group held six meetings, on 27 March, 19 and 30 April, 10 May, 1 June and 11 September 2012.

6. The programme of work was organized in two practical stages, as follows: (a) general discussion and exchange of views; and (b) thematic meetings. The themes identified by the Co-Chairs for consideration in the four thematic meetings comprised:

(a) The role and authority of the General Assembly and its relationship to the other principal organs of the United Nations and other groups outside the United Nations;

(b) The working methods of the General Assembly, the implementation of General Assembly resolutions, and the agenda, as well as other operational and technical issues, including options for more time-effective, efficient and secure balloting in the General Assembly;

(c) The role and responsibility of the General Assembly in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as in the selection of candidatures for other executive heads of the United Nations system;

(d) The functions of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, including strengthening its institutional memory, as well as its relationship with the Secretariat.

A. General discussion

7. The Co-Chairs of the Working Group convened the first meeting of the Working Group on 27 March to allow for a general exchange of views. At the beginning of the meeting, the President of the General Assembly delivered an opening statement. In the course of the subsequent debate, 17 representatives made statements, including on behalf of various groups.

8. In his opening remarks, the President of the General Assembly stressed that the Assembly needed to adapt to current world realities to remain strong, efficient and effective. Being the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, the Assembly was also the most universal and legitimate body in the world. Much more progress therefore needed to be made in the revitalization of its work. One of the most important steps was to implement its own resolutions, which, the President underlined, was the responsibility of Member States. The President also called for innovative approaches to strengthening the Office of the President, both politically and in terms of resources. Turning to international peace and security, the President noted the Assembly's complementary role to the Security Council, pursuant to the Charter, and highlighted its role as a viable alternative for the international community to act in moments of deadlock. He mentioned in this context in particular that the Assembly's engagement and responses to new and emerging situations of common concern reflected the very mission of the Organization, and he presented practical measures for revitalizing the role and the effectiveness of the General Assembly. The President invited Member States to provide innovative and concrete proposals to further identify ways to enhance the role and authority of the General Assembly and noted that equal importance should be attached to the different elements of revitalization of the General Assembly.

9. Following the statement of the President of the General Assembly, the Co-Chairs, in their opening remarks, reiterated that they welcomed the decision of the President to adopt "United Nations reform and revitalization" as one of the four key pillars of the sixty-sixth session, noting that his many initiatives had already underlined the importance he personally attached to enhancing the role and the work of this body. The Co-Chairs underscored their intention to facilitate a fruitful and satisfying outcome to the deliberations of the Working Group, based on cooperation and transparency. They also indicated their intention to invite the Chairs of the Main Committees, pursuant to resolution 65/315, to brief the Working Group on their working methods. Briefings by the Secretariat on other matters related to revitalization would also be organized, as required, including on documentation. The Co-Chairs additionally encouraged delegations to further develop their views and present concrete proposals on revitalization in the course of the proceedings of the Working Group.

10. In the ensuing debate, delegations universally welcomed the Co-Chairs and the presence of the President of the General Assembly, and expressed their support for the objective of revitalizing the work of the Assembly. While many Member States were of the view that this could best be achieved by focusing on the political aspects of the issue, such as strengthening the role and authority of the Assembly, including its relationships with other principal organs, in particular the Security Council, as well as the selection process of the Secretary-General and the support for the Office of the President of the Assembly, a number of other delegations prioritized the

working methods of the Assembly, streamlining its agenda and other technical matters, such as documentation and the balloting process.

11. Common support, however, was expressed for focusing on the implementation of resolutions, which was indeed considered to be a matter of critical importance in its own right, and several suggestions were made as to how to achieve it. One group of States specifically emphasized its desire to identify the reasons behind any lack of implementation. Further, one delegation proposed that the Working Group agree on an implementation "road map".

12. Regarding the role and authority of the General Assembly, the Assembly's relationship with other principal organs again featured importantly, with many delegations opposing what they perceived to be encroachment by the Security Council. While one delegation suggested that the agenda of the Security Council was overburdened precisely because it dealt with too many issues that could be handled by the General Assembly, another was critical of, and concerned by, any proposal that would aim to dictate to the Security Council on its working methods, underscoring that the Council was co-equal to the Assembly.

13. On the selection and the appointment of the Secretary-General, a group of States, referring to Article 97 of the Charter of the United Nations, renewed its call for the process to be more transparent and inclusive of all Member States and to allow for an effective and efficient participation of the Assembly in it. One delegation suggested that the Security Council should send a list of names of candidates to the General Assembly, rather than the name of a single candidate. The same speaker also suggested that the Assembly should decide this issue by a two-thirds majority, rather than the simple majority indicated in resolution 11/1, and it closed by insisting that the Assembly should also encourage formal presentations by and interaction with candidates. The same speaker advocated a stronger role for the Assembly in other senior-level appointments, a point supported by a number of other delegations.

14. On the strengthening of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, specifically its institutional memory, many speakers underscored the extent to which the role and the activities of the President had evolved over recent years. They emphasized the importance of ensuring the effectiveness of the Office, including through increasing its budget and strengthening its institutional memory, and they thanked the President for having underlined precisely this point. One delegation linked this to the issue of ensuring equal opportunity to all Member States, developed and developing, to assume the presidency, efficiently and effectively. Another concurred that finances should not be an impediment. The issuance of *The PGA Handbook: A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly* during the sixty-fifth session was commended by a number of delegations as a notable contribution to strengthening both the Office and its institutional memory. More generally, the importance of the transfer of lessons learned and best practices was underscored.

15. Another issue frequently mentioned was mediation. A number of delegations pointedly commended the President for choosing as the theme of the sixty-sixth session "The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means", as they felt that it emphasized the role of the Assembly in areas of international peace and security, including as a vital tool for conflict prevention and resolution. More

broadly, some speakers urged that the themes of upcoming sessions reflect the objectives of strengthening and revitalizing the Assembly and its work as well.

16. While a group of States suggested that focusing only on the procedural aspects and working methods of the Assembly would not lead to comprehensive improvement of its work, working methods were nonetheless very much emphasized by many others who looked forward to forthcoming briefings by the Chairs of the Main Committees and other related discussions. At the same time, a group of States took pains to reiterate the intergovernmental and inclusive nature that discussions on these issues must maintain.

17. Streamlining the agenda was an area of particular importance for those delegations wishing to see improvement in the Assembly's working methods. They focused on the biennialization, the triennialization, and the clustering of resolutions, and encouraged the elimination of resolutions on topics they deemed obscure, arguing that these undermined the credibility of the Assembly in the wider public domain. Suggestions were also made regarding the biennialization, the triennialization and the clustering of resolutions in the Main Committees, as well as streamlining aspects of the work of the Second and Third Committees with that of the Economic and Social Council.

18. Issues of documentation and balloting were raised. Regarding documentation, the need for timely distribution of the resolutions and records of the Assembly was reiterated, with a number of delegations highlighting the importance and the potential of electronic communication in timely document distribution. One group suggested that documentation management and timely translation would merit further attention by the Working Group, and that a briefing on technical aspects of electronic balloting would also prove useful.

B. Thematic meetings

The role and authority of the General Assembly and its relationship to the other principal organs of the United Nations and other groups outside the United Nations

19. The second meeting of the Working Group, which was also its first thematic meeting, was held on 19 April, and focused on the role and authority of the General Assembly and its relationship to the other principal organs of the United Nations and other groups outside of the United Nations. In the course of the debate, 17 delegations intervened, including on behalf of groups of States.

20. In their opening remarks, the Co-Chairs referred to their letter to all Member States dated 11 April 2012, with which they circulated a proposed programme of work for the Working Group. In the letter they had also invited delegations to refer to the annex to the report of the Working Group submitted at the sixty-third session (A/63/959) and to present views on the status of the implementation of those items related to the role and authority of the General Assembly and its relationship to the other principal organs of the United Nations. The Co-Chairs pointed out that non-implementation of General Assembly resolutions, in particular those adopted by consensus, could diminish the role and authority of the Assembly, as repeatedly noted by many delegations in the past. They also recalled the theme selected by the President of the Assembly for the general debate of the sixty-sixth session, "The

role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means", which had been timely in regard to the role of the General Assembly of effectively responding, in a timely manner, to emerging challenges and current events of common concern to the international community.

21. In the ensuing debate, many Member States reaffirmed their desire for a strengthened General Assembly, which they considered could be achieved by, inter alia, regular meetings of the President of the General Assembly with the Presidents of both other principal organs and subsidiary bodies; periodic updates by the President on his travels and briefings by the Secretary-General on his most recent activities; highlighting the work of the General Assembly, inter alia, through the convening of thematic debates; and ensuring that the programme of work of the General Assembly focused on the most important issues of the day. Lack of political will generally and encroachment by other organs specifically were cited by some as major obstacles to achieving a strong and revitalized General Assembly.

22. Regarding the relationship of the General Assembly with the Security Council, a group of Member States remained deeply concerned by the continuous encroachment it perceived on the part of the Security Council on issues that clearly fell under the functions and powers of the General Assembly, even in the areas of norm-setting, legislation, administrative and budgetary matters, establishing definitions and other matters not related to international peace and security. One point raised in this regard was the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, which the same group felt should be more comprehensive and analytical and include the views expressed by the members of the Council during the consideration of its agenda items. This group further called for the submission by the Security Council of special subject-oriented reports, though one of its members clarified its understanding that the General Assembly should first request such special reports from the Security Council. A subsequent speaker, on the other hand, did not agree with the suggestion that the Council's report was inadequate, noting that the report fully and factually reflected the annual activities of the Council. The speaker also warned against interference with the prerogatives of the Security Council, strongly emphasizing the need to respect the Charter. In a similar vein, another speaker stressed that the Council was co-equal to the General Assembly and that it would be concerned with any proposals that would try to affect this balance. That having been said, the speaker nonetheless supported increased cooperation among the principal organs to focus on the streamlining of their work and the reduction of overlap. It also urged the Working Group to focus on consensus issues, with tangible outcomes. Another group of States was of the view that the efforts of the Working Group on the working methods of the Security Council had contributed to further improving the reports of the Council, as well as the relationship between the two bodies.

23. One delegation, however, underlined that the General Assembly, as the only universal body, had primacy among the principal organs, pointing to the fact that the other bodies reported to the Assembly and that their members were elected by it. As a consequence, the delegation felt that the Assembly should be listed before other organs, including the Security Council, in all United Nations documents, including the *Journal of the United Nations*. It proposed that the meetings of the Assembly, which were posted alongside those of the Council, should be listed on the left, rather than the right.

24. Regarding the Economic and Social Council, a number of delegations commented that coordination between the Presidents of the two bodies was important and useful, including for the purpose of discussing their respective programmes of work. One speaker suggested that this discussion could include the post-2015 development agenda, and specifically the development of the sustainable development goals, but it cautioned that that should not result in any weakening of the Economic and Social Council.

25. A few comments were also made pertaining to the relationship of the General Assembly to the Secretariat, essentially highlighting the intergovernmental nature of the United Nations, which entailed the need to consult with and seek intergovernmental approval for any decisions taken by the Secretariat concerning the priorities and the objectives of the Organization, the structure and the functioning of its departments, and the budget as a whole. Some delegations pointed to resolution 66/257 in that regard.

26. A number of delegations welcomed the continued use of thematic debates as a tangible outcome of the revitalization process, encouraging their further and future use to focus on relevant issues currently faced by the international community. One speaker suggested that this significant achievement could be enhanced by organizing thematic debates around current events, as had recently been done with the debate held on disaster risk reduction. Another speaker highlighted the opportunities for exchange with civil society and other stakeholders that thematic debates offered.

27. A group of States noted with satisfaction the efforts of the Secretary-General, the Department of Public Information and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (A/66/730) aimed at increasing visibility of the General Assembly. It further requested them to continue to take appropriate measures to enhance world public awareness of the work of the General Assembly, including through facilitating and encouraging the media's reporting of its work. Another group of States underscored that the best way to achieve this was for the Assembly to focus on topical issues and take appropriate measures, including responses to new and emerging situations of common concern. This group also noted that briefings by the President on his recent activities were a valuable source of information.

28. The implementation of resolutions was considered to be a matter of critical importance, which a number of speakers noted with concern. One speaker suggested that the annex to the report of the Working Group submitted at the sixty-third session of the Assembly (A/63/959) be updated to reflect, in a separate column, the implementation of mandates. But a group of States felt strongly that the vast majority of the provisions under this rubric had been implemented or were being implemented on an ongoing basis. It also felt that provisions that could be considered as not implemented on substance could be addressed and analysed on a case-by-case basis. This exercise could then be reflected in the report of the Working Group and, if appropriate, in the resolution. To support its point, the group cited two specific examples, namely, the provision in resolution 51/241 to refer sections of the annual report of the Secretary-General for more detailed consideration by the Main Committees, which it felt had not yet been implemented but should be further examined; and the improvements already undertaken with regard to the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

29. Regarding the relationship with other groups outside the United Nations, a group of States reaffirmed that the General Assembly was the only intergovernmental body with universal membership and a broad mandate with far-reaching responsibilities in the context of emerging global challenges. It also welcomed the outreach made by recent Group of 20 presidencies to associate the General Assembly with its work in a process of thorough consultation and in a spirit of accountability and transparency. Another group of States, however, was more reluctant, and three of its members specifically and individually objected to such outreach, expressing concern at what they perceived as the vagueness of it, and fearing that it might undermine the role and authority of the General Assembly.

The working methods of the General Assembly, the implementation of General Assembly resolutions, and the agenda, as well as other operational and technical issues, including options for more time-effective, efficient and secure balloting in the General Assembly

30. The working methods of the General Assembly, the implementation of General Assembly resolutions, and the agenda, as well as other operational and technical issues, including options for more time-effective, efficient and secure balloting in the General Assembly, were the focus of both the third meeting of the Working Group, held on 30 April 2012, and part of its fourth meeting, held on 10 May 2012. These included briefings by the Chairs of the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Sixth Committees on the working methods of those bodies, as well as a briefing on documentation by the Director of the Meetings and Publishing Division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. Both of the meetings were followed by question-and-answer sessions with delegations. In the course of the subsequent debate, statements were made by more than 15 speakers, including on behalf of two groups of Member States.

Briefing by the Main Committee Chairs

31. The Co-Chairs invited the Chairs of the Main Committees to brief the Working Group pursuant to paragraph 15 of resolution 65/315, which encouraged each Main Committee to discuss its working methods at the sixty-sixth session, and invited the Chairs of the Main Committees, at the sixty-sixth session, "to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group, as appropriate, on the discussions on the working methods".

32. The Chair of the First Committee identified the three stages of its work: its general debate, its thematic discussion and its action on draft resolutions and decisions. These, the Chair noted, had proven effective in managing the efficient operation of the Committee. The first stage, the general debate, was a standard feature of all Main Committees. The First Committee experience with it had demonstrated that it could be made more efficient through the use of a rolling list of speakers. In doing so, however, there was a need to find a balance between the desire of delegations to synchronize the availability of their high-level representatives and the need to keep the rolling list of speakers moving. This, the Chair suggested, was also an issue of using the conference resources wisely, especially at a time of budget austerity.

33. The thematic debates, which followed the general debate, needed further to improve interaction of the Committee with various stakeholders, in the view of the Chair. Such improvement could be achieved through increasing dialogue and

interactivity between the representatives of Member States, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and Chairs of disarmament entities. Another target area for improvement was the participation of civil society, the modalities of which could be further enhanced. During the session, the Chair noted, the Committee had had a lively debate on the participation of non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, and informal consultations on this important topic would continue next year in the Committee. Thirdly, in an effort to avoid repeatedly adopting the same resolutions every year, unchanged consensus resolutions that had no budgetary implications could be adopted every other year, and thus ease the workload of the Committee. Finally, making the interventions of delegations more concise and trying to avoid repetition could help prevent delays in the Committee's programme of work.

34. There was also much that could be done about the third stage of the work of the First Committee, namely taking action on draft resolutions and decisions. It was important to make sure that drafts were action-oriented. The Chair, noting that some draft resolutions changed very little from session to session, suggested that these might better be converted into decisions, especially in cases where the draft contained no new elements. The Chair extended gratitude to those delegations that had done so during the main part of the sixty-sixth session and hoped that that positive trend would continue at the sixty-seventh session.

35. Another issue of increasing the effectiveness of the operations of the Committee concerned the greening of the Organization. In that context, the Chair supported efforts by the Secretariat to increase the use of electronic versions of documents. The First Committee had used very few hard copies in the conference room during the sixty-sixth session, and most delegations were getting their information from the working web portal of the First Committee, QuickFirst, a resource that could be further improved.

36. Finally, the Chair underlined that the Bureau of the First Committee needed to be formed well in advance of the Assembly session, in order to allow necessary consultations between various stakeholders in the disarmament process.

37. The Chair of the Fourth Committee opened her remarks by emphasizing that, while only two of the Committee items were not annual, it was generally felt that that worked well for the body. The Chair then outlined the Committee's particular practice of hearing petitioners, particularly on Non-Self-Governing Territories, noting that there had been only 65 in the sixty-sixth session, as opposed to 93 only a few years earlier. The Fourth Committee had also adopted an interactive approach in considering the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and related items, and it was working generally to enhance the interactive nature of its deliberations. Towards the same end, it had also, at the beginning of the general debates on various items, held interactive dialogues with high-level representatives from the Secretariat, as well as panel discussions. The discussion on the item "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all its aspects" was among these.

38. The Chair then stated that, in considering its working methods, the Committee had come to the conclusion that it was not necessary to rationalize items, and that it did not envision the possibility of clustering or eliminating further items at this juncture. Returning to this point in the question-and-answer session, the Chair commented that there was general consensus within the Committee that it already

had a concentrated approach and that its agenda was sufficiently streamlined. She acknowledged, however, that there was general awareness within the Committee that further effort could still be made to streamline the manner in which it considered items.

39. The Second Committee, as noted by the Chair at the start of his statement, was the only Committee at the previous session to have adopted a specific decision with tangible objectives geared to increasing the effectiveness of its working methods. The Chair also stressed that the Committee's effectiveness was an important determinant in the fulfilment of the United Nations development agenda. During the Committee's three-day general debate, a wide range of views had been expressed concerning its working methods. The Chair also noted that that was the first year in many that the resolution on trade had been adopted without a vote. Also, at the sixty-sixth session, the Second Committee had held six special events, which had proven to be exceptionally successful. The Chair reiterated that the timely election of the Bureau members was crucial, as were handover meetings between the incoming and outgoing members. Also important were timely debates that would leave sufficient time for negotiating and adopting resolutions. In this regard, the Chair underlined the need to respect and enforce given time limits. Another important related factor was the impact that the early appointment of facilitators could have on the work of the Committee. Regarding the latter, the Chair suggested that the Working Group might wish to address the issue of the participation of the European Union in the work of the Main Committees. He also argued that the periodization of agenda items could be further considered and welcomed.

40. The Chair of the Third Committee noted that, even though it had had fewer meetings during the sixty-sixth session, the Committee had successfully completed its work as scheduled, adopting nine more draft resolutions than it had in the previous session. The Third Committee had also heard a total of 855 statements, a statistic that, the Chair suggested, clearly reflected both the intensity of its work and the volume of its workload. The Chair particularly underscored the importance of electing the Bureau members in a timely manner.

41. Regarding the Committee's proceedings, the Chair noted that, while all items referred to the Third Committee were considered annually, the submission of some reports and draft resolutions had been biennialized. He also underscored that it was the intention of the Committee to proceed further in this direction, suggesting that further rationalization by clustering or joint consideration of items would also be desirable. Regarding the length of resolutions, one option could be not to repeat the same preambular paragraphs every year, but to refer to previous resolutions instead. Another possible improvement could be obtained by reducing the number of reports requested from the Secretariat, and to keep the focus of them on recent developments, progress made, challenges, conclusions and recommendations. Additionally, he suggested that, in the very rare situations when reports were not available in all languages within the six-week time frame, then every effort should be made to make them available, in their advance unedited version, in English only, on the website of the substantive department responsible for them. The Chair highlighted the late issuance of the finalized report of the Human Rights Council, owing to reasons beyond the control of the Secretariat, suggesting that it had hampered the work of the Third Committee and prevented it from having a more engaging and constructive session on the issue. He specifically noted the situation regarding the eighteenth session of the Human Rights Council, commenting that it

had ended a mere two days before the session of the Third Committee began. The Chair therefore suggested revisiting resolution 65/281, the outcome of the General Assembly review of the Human Rights Council at the sixty-fifth session, to allow the Secretariat to have sufficient time to issue the document according to schedule.

42. The Chair also suggested clarifying resolution 65/276, on the participation of the European Union in the work of the Organization, so as to avoid differences by major groups and Member States concerning the speaking order. He also noted the concern expressed by the Bureau and individual delegations as to the lack of availability of rooms and secretariat support for consultations, owing to the large number of informal consultations on draft resolutions. It was therefore advisable, the Chair noted, to review the support given to the secretariat of the Third Committee so that it adequately reflected its requirements. With a view to expediting information-sharing and promoting efficiency, the website of the Third Committee should be regularly improved, developed and utilized.

43. After outlining the remit and the workload of the Sixth Committee, its Chair began his discussions of its working methods by underscoring the timeliness of both its meetings and time allocation. He specifically mentioned the positive practice whereby periods during which no formal discussion was being held were used for informal consultations on its draft resolutions. In that context, he described measures he had taken within the Committee and its Bureau to ensure that all resolutions were discussed in at least one meeting of informal, open, transparent and inclusive consultations. Suggesting that there should be reconsideration of the need for annual discussion of some agenda items, he offered the possibility that these could be considered in summary form, without specifically raising the option of rationalization. Lamenting the frequent formality of debate in the Committee, he had sought ways to make it more interactive and substantive. He also suggested that there were some items, such as the rule of law, that might benefit from being discussed in greater depth.

44. The Chair then focused on the work of the International Law Commission, stressing the importance of it to his Committee. He underlined how important it was for delegations involved to receive its report well ahead of the beginning of its deliberations, as it was necessary for them to begin to study this material long before the item was discussed. To facilitate this, he suggested the possibility of having the International Law Commission meet earlier in the year. Acknowledging that its debate was also extremely formal, he urged that a way be found to make it more interactive. He also urged that the participation of its Rapporteur and of members of the Sixth Committee in it be facilitated, suggesting that at least some of its sessions should be held in New York. He also firmly underscored that analysis of the Commission report should not coincide with the analysis of other topics pertaining to legal matters.

45. Overall, the Chair was supportive of efforts to streamline the work of the Committee, acknowledging, inter alia, that further clustering of items might be possible. As had the Chair of the Fourth Committee, however, he felt more strongly that the Committee needed to reassess the manner in which it addressed issues, warning that if debate was not interactive, there would be no progress. He, too, urged briefer oral statements, which would leave more time for interactive debate and bring more focus to each topic.

46. Following the presentations by the Main Committee Chairs, one delegation suggested finding a mechanism to study the most interesting points made in the briefings, one that could be used to move forward specific proposals for further improving the working methods of the Main Committee.

Briefing by the Secretariat on documentation

47. In his briefing on documentation, the Director of the Meetings and Publishing Division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management focused principally upon three points: the results achieved by the Working Group in this area through its previous resolutions; the question of accessibility of the visually impaired to United Nations documents; and the way forward. On the first of these, he made particular note of the mandate provided in three resolutions: resolution 55/285, paragraph 24 (b), for the Secretariat to provide electronic access to text of statements and reports, and, in the case of reports, simultaneous access to texts in all official languages; resolution 64/301, in which the Assembly encouraged Member States to make full use of the e-services provided by the Secretariat, taking into account the cost savings and the reduced environmental impact; and resolution 65/315, in which the Assembly encouraged the Secretariat to consolidate documents to avoid duplication. Between them, these three references, and the mandates they provided, had helped the Secretariat to achieve substantial savings and efficiencies, increasing its effectiveness as well.

48. The numbers of documents, pages and imprints all reflected this. In the last four years alone, there had been a 17 per cent reduction in the number of jobs handled (from 8,576 down to 7,342). The number of pages processed in the first quarter of each year had dropped from 103,644 in 2011 to only 89,722 in 2012, a striking decrease after the substantial increases of the few previous years. Most impressively, the number of pages printed in the first quarter of each year had fallen by 75 per cent over only the last three years: from 61,255,307 in 2009 to only 15,087,618 in 2012. In addition, both Permanent Missions and capitals were both increasingly utilizing e-services to download documents directly, more and more frequently without printing. The sum savings of this was $10 million in the 2012-2013 budget, much of which had been saved through the elimination of 148 different posts.

49. As to accessibility of official documents for the visually impaired, while the Secretariat had been fully committed to this objective, it had been much more difficult to achieve when it required working with printed versions. However, with the advent of e-documents, which could be modified much more simply to make them accessible, this was becoming much easier and much more achievable. Further, a number of the mandates given to the Secretariat in this area had also facilitated this process.

50. Lastly, in considering the way forward, the Director outlined a new business model based on four pillars: the portal; e-publishing; e-tools; and print-on-demand. As these became increasingly integrated, the benefits that would accrue from them would include greater sustainability; greater efficiency and effectiveness; greater accessibility; and an increase in knowledge management. The Director closed his briefing with a brief demonstration of the Papersmart system, highlighting the possibility of accessing it in all of the six official languages, its access for the

visually impaired, its organization by agenda item, and its use as a training tool for new delegates, through both the meeting videos and the documents it contained.

51. In the question-and-answer session, three delegations put questions to the Director. One was concerned at the number of posts eliminated and wanted to know more about it. The Director explained that as many of the posts as possible were being cut through retirement, with 20 of them having been achieved through redeployment elsewhere in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. A second speaker underscored the importance of having websites updated in all six languages and wanted to know what efforts were being made to achieve that. The Director pointed to the website of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) as an example of a website that the Secretariat was indeed maintaining and updating in all six official languages. A third Member State wanted to know what measures the Secretariat was taking to ensure that the documents being sent to Member States electronically were actually being received. The Director explained that, as of May 2011, communications were being sent electronically to Member States with a confirmation of receipt requested. Where that confirmation was not received, the Secretariat telephoned the Mission in question to be sure that the document sent had indeed been received.

Interventions by Member States

52. In general comments, one group of States devoted particular attention to the improvement of working methods, noting that, despite this being a focus of the Working Group for many years, the results achieved had been limited. While it noted that it was primarily the responsibility of each and every Member State to improve working methods, the group nonetheless remained insistent that this area was the one with the greatest potential for making real change and achieving a real contribution to revitalization. Noting that the consolidation of existing resolutions could bring real added value, it suggested that the annex contained in the report of the Working Group submitted at the sixty-third session (A/63/959) should be reviewed and updated and that Member States should take determined action to increase implementation. This inventory, which should be continued on a regular basis, should also include indications of non-implementation. In addition, the group felt that possibilities for further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of items should be thoroughly examined, a position shared by a number of subsequent speakers. The leadership of the Main Committee Chairs in this regard, the group suggested, was of critical importance. An additional speaker further suggested an examination of possible measures to streamline the work of the Second and Third Committees.

53. Another group of States, on the other hand, strongly underscored that any such measures could not be conducted without a clear consent of the co-sponsoring States or of States concerned. Generally, this group underlined that revitalization was a political process, even in its technical dimensions. Subsequent speakers also questioned the impact that previous streamlining exercises had actually had on the Assembly's efficiency and effectiveness, suggesting that it might be useful to conduct a study of their impact on the Assembly's work.

54. Regarding the implementation of resolutions, there was unanimity that this was an issue of great importance in the revitalization of the General Assembly. Some speakers underscored the need for political will to be shown in this context,

but others pointedly wondered whether or not one of the main obstacles to implementation was the "implementability" of many of the provisions contained in resolutions, including those on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly itself.

55. Turning to the question of high-level meetings and their scheduling, an issue first raised in the Working Group at the sixty-fifth session, one group of States emphasized that organizational and procedural aspects should be looked into very carefully and that the role of the General Committee and the President of the General Assembly should be further explored in this regard. Another group of States noted that a majority of high-level meetings dealt with issues of utmost importance to developing countries, but signalled openness to consider proposals aimed at strengthening the visibility of the various Assembly events. One delegation pointedly asserted that the convening of too many high-level meetings, particularly in too tight a time frame, would undermine their value.

56. Regarding balloting, one group of States showed particular interest in the manner in which improved technologies could be harnessed to make the process of elections in the General Assembly more efficient. Another group of States, however, cautioned that the requirements of security and confidentiality had not yet been fully addressed, a point that was reiterated by a number of subsequent speakers. One delegation strongly emphasized that the question of voting and balloting technology in the context of the capital master plan should be considered in the Fifth Committee, in the light of the budgetary implications of the question.

57. One group of States thought that additional measures could be taken to improve the quality and the accuracy of documents in the six official languages, reiterating also the need to improve their timely issuance after adoption. It also, however, noted with appreciation the efforts made by the Secretariat to reduce the distribution of the paper version of official documents to Permanent Missions, suggesting that the savings achieved could be used to further improve their quality.

The role and responsibility of the General Assembly in the selection and the appointment of the Secretary-General, as well as in the selection of candidatures for other executive heads of the United Nations system

58. The remainder of the fourth meeting of the Working Group focused on the role of the General Assembly in the selection and the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as in the selection of candidates for other executive head posts in the United Nations system. Nine delegations, including two speaking on behalf of groups of States, intervened to present their positions on these issues.

59. One group of States underlined the utmost importance of the role of the General Assembly in the selection of the Secretary-General becoming more active, effective and efficient, in accordance with the provisions of resolutions 51/241, 60/286, 64/301 and 65/315. This group was of the view that the Security Council, particularly its permanent members, had assumed too large powers in this matter over the years, thereby encroaching on the role of the General Assembly in this matter. This was in part due to an interpretation of resolution 11 (I) that favoured the Security Council, the provisions of which had been partly amended or superseded by later resolutions. This same group suggested that one possible means of ameliorating this situation could be to encourage the President of the General

Assembly to consult with Member States in order to identify and endorse candidates that could be forwarded to the Security Council. It also suggested that formal presentation of candidates before the General Assembly could allow for an effective and useful interaction with Member States. Several speakers aligned themselves with this position, some pointing out that it was the position of the majority of the Member States. A number of speakers suggested that resolution 11 (I) was the product of a bygone era, arguing that subsequent resolutions on this issue needed to be implemented fully and faithfully. One speaker suggested including a decision in the draft resolution to be developed by the Working Group in the course of the current session to the effect that the General Assembly would in the future not consider a recommendation from the Security Council if the provisions of relevant resolutions were not implemented.

60. Another group of States attached paramount importance to the full implementation of the provisions of Article 97 of the Charter, rule 141 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and General Assembly resolutions 11 (I), 51/241 and 60/286 in this context, while nonetheless continuing to share the view that the selection process needed to be transparent and inclusive of all Member States. This group believed that the President of the General Assembly could play a constructive role in the process, in particular by consulting with Member States, and that the process could be facilitated by the presentation of candidatures in a manner that allowed for sufficient time for interaction with Member States. One delegation pointed to existing provisions in resolution 51/241 that could be made use of in this regard and considered it useful to review the lessons learned from past experience in anticipation of the next appointment process. Noting that the role of the Secretary-General had considerably expanded in the light of increasing global challenges, another speaker stressed the importance of ensuring that the Secretary-General had the widest possible support. Accordingly, it argued, the selection process should be based on harmony and consensus.

61. A subsequent speaker suggested that, where procedures were sufficient, no change needed to be made. In this regard, it suggested, the Charter was very clear in describing an uncomplicated process for the selection and the appointment of the Secretary-General, one that was successful in ensuring a viable candidate. This speaker further reiterated that the General Assembly and Security Council were co-equal principal organs. Another speaker similarly indicated its readiness to look at ways to improving the existing procedures, while also stressing that any initiative must be strictly based on the Charter provisions.

62. Regarding the appointment processes for other executive heads of the United Nations system, a group of States acknowledged the recommendations contained in the relevant report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/2009/8). However, another group of States, in taking note of the same report, also took the opportunity to reaffirm strongly its understanding that, in the light of Article 97 of the Charter, the selection processes for the Secretary-General and those for other executive heads were fundamentally different.

Functions of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, including strengthening its institutional memory and its relationship with the Secretariat

63. The fifth meeting of the Working Group, held on 1 June 2012, focused on the strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the

General Assembly. A total of 11 representatives made statements presenting their positions, including on behalf of two groups of States. At the outset of the meeting, the Working Group heard briefings by the Chef de Cabinet of the President of the General Assembly and the Executive Office of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management on the funding and staffing of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. The Director of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council Affairs Division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management also clarified the latest status on technological developments regarding balloting as provided by the Department for Management.

64. The Chef de Cabinet noted that, in the light of the Assembly's continuously growing workload from session to session, which now filled the full calendar year, and the President's responsibility to promote the public visibility of the General Assembly through outreach activities, which entailed travel beyond Headquarters, adequate human and financial resources were essential for the presidency to effectively discharge its duties. These included moving forward the General Assembly agenda and leading and facilitating follow-up processes. Noting the diverse nature of the current staff of the Office, which was both gender-balanced and representative of all regions of the world, the Chef de Cabinet pointed out the contributions received from some Member States in the form of secondments, as well as the considerable support received from Qatar. He found it surprising that, at a time when the overall budget of the Organization had increased, the level of resources allocated to the Office had remained unchanged since 1998. While a Trust Fund had been established in support of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, it had not received any contributions during the sixty-sixth session. The Office thus faced grave financial difficulties, particularly during the remainder of its term, despite the significant contributions of Qatar, with its regular budget thus depleted. While the General Assembly, in resolution 66/246, had reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to submit proposals to review the Office's resource allocation in the 2014-2015 budget cycle, it was to be hoped that the Assembly would take adequate measures, at least to match the evolution of the regular budget and by assigning additional posts. Regarding institutional memory, the transition between presidencies was of great importance, as were proper documentation and archiving of the records of the Office. The Chef de Cabinet also suggested the possibility of retaining some staff from one session to the next, particularly in the light of some mandates extending beyond a single session. He also welcomed the idea of harnessing the expertise of other presidencies through the use of a troika of presidents.

65. The Executive Officer of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management subsequently, pursuant to resolution 65/315, paragraph 26, provided a report on the staffing and funding of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. She indicated that the Office staffing included five posts in the Office itself, four in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Spokesperson provided by the Department of Public Information, two Security Officers provided by the Department of Safety and Security, the President's car and driver, legal services and counsel provided by the Office of Legal Affairs, equipment provided by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office of Information and Communications Technology, and premises of the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

Financial support included the $250,000 mandated since 1998 (which, with adjustment for inflation ("recosting"), currently amounted to slightly more than $300,000). The use of these funds was at the discretion of the President of the General Assembly, but they were often used to cover travel, hospitality and overtime. At the same time, a Trust Fund had been established in 2010 to accept voluntary contributions in support of the Office and its work. These funds, however, were often earmarked for specific events or activities, and they usually needed to be used in the same session in which they were contributed. The Executive Officer also confirmed that no contributions to the Trust Fund had been made during the sixty-sixth session.

66. In response to a previous request for an update from the Secretariat regarding whether there had been any new technological developments with regard to balloting technology, the Working Group was informed by the Director of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Affairs Division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management that technological developments in general terms had not substantially changed so as to correspond to the criteria listed in resolution 65/315, paragraph 19, namely the need to ascertain the credibility, the reliability and the confidentiality of the balloting process.

67. In their general statements, Member States focused on the question of the human and financial resources allocated to the Office of the President, as well as on other areas that could serve to improve its institutional memory, such as proper archiving of documentation and lessons learned reports.

68. One group of States, pointing out the continuously expanding workload of the Presidents of the General Assembly over recent years, expressed concern over what it characterized as the non-implementation of the provisions of resolutions 64/301 and 65/315, in which the Secretary-General had been requested to submit proposals to review the budget allocation of the Office of the President. This concern was also voiced by several delegations speaking in their national capacity. One of these pointed to the need for increased resources from within the regular budget, so as not to affect the credibility and the impartiality of the post of the President of the General Assembly by making him dependent on other sources of funding, and also so as not to discourage countries that lack financial resources from presenting a candidate for the post of President. Another speaker specifically recalled the response received in the Fifth Committee when the issue was raised there last year, namely, that the Controller had contacted the then-President, who had responded that an increase in the resources of the Office was not necessary for improved performance of the presidency. As a result of that response, no proposals had been made. Given this, the delegation wondered whether the views of the Office of the President were required in preparation of the budget process, as the General Assembly had already requested the Secretariat to submit specific proposals.

69. In response to this question, the Executive Officer stressed that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management had exercised due diligence by communicating the specific mandate, when it was adopted, in a note from the Under-Secretary-General to the then-Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General. She further noted that, during the preparation of the budget for 2012-2013, the then-President had been approached through the Office of the Secretary-General, inviting any such recommendations. The response received from the Office of the President of the sixty-fifth session was that it was not felt that any additional

resources were needed for the successful conduct of the duties of the Office, and so none were requested. The matter would be brought to the attention of the Controller, possibly to determine a more appropriate course of action in anticipation of the following budget exercise, which would take place during the fourth quarter of 2012, for the 2014-2015 biennium.

70. A group of States further underlined the need to assign additional posts to the Office of the President on a permanent basis, including the strict implementation of mandates related to the assignment of a spokesperson and assistant for the President. Similarly, it felt that expenses related to security placed an extra burden on the Office's limited resources. It also requested the allocation of adequate space for the Office of the President in the North Lawn Building and, upon its move back into the Headquarters, in that building as well.

71. Another group of States, for its part, noted the importance of improving the institutional memory of the Office to ensure coherence and continuity in the activities of the General Assembly, and also noted with appreciation all the measures that had already been taken in this regard. The group considered it essential that the Office be allocated dedicated staff from within the Secretariat, within agreed resources, and argued that the improvement of existing processes and staffing arrangements would allow the President to exercise his role more effectively. It also welcomed the support provided by the Secretariat so far regarding proper protocol and security services and adequate office space. A subsequent speaker similarly focused on institutional memory, underscoring the need to reinforce it in an efficient and cost-effective manner. A number of delegations specifically cited *The PGA Handbook* as a welcome initiative in this regard. Another delegation underscored the importance of continuing to analyse measures and procedures that could maximize the utilization of existing human and financial resources. Yet another suggested that it was important to review and examine what had been improved to date through the addition of staff. It also suggested assessing how large a staff would be needed to manage the work of the Office efficiently on the basis of a thorough study of job descriptions in order to ensure the desired gain in productivity.

72. A subsequent delegation underlined its support for pragmatic improvements in the work of the Office of the President and supported many of the ideas that had already been put forward, including providing lessons learned briefings from one presidency to the next; setting deadlines for mandates adopted by the General Assembly and for working groups established by it; reducing the number of items on the agenda of the Assembly; rationalizing meeting schedules to allow all delegations to follow the work of the General Assembly; undertaking transparent consultations between the General Assembly and the Security Council; and exchanging views, at the outset of the session, among the heads of the principal organs. Another speaker insisted that any proposal for increasing the resources allocated to the Office of the President should be considered in accordance with the existing rules of procedure, specifically in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and in the Fifth Committee. Consideration of better use of existing resources was also proposed. The speaker recalled the difficult discussions that had taken place in the Fifth Committee during the consideration of the budget for 2012-2013. It suggested that another option would be to examine additional use of Secretariat resources, as was done with regard to the Security Council.

73. With regard to balloting technology, a group of States expressed the concern that none of the systems presented during previous sessions appeared to meet the Assembly's requirements regarding reliability, credibility, integrity and confidentiality. It also stressed that the development of electronic devices related to the voting and balloting systems within the framework of the capital master plan could not be invoked in itself to urge Member States to adopt these systems. Another group of States, however, emphasized the importance of improving the existing balloting system and the need to adapt it to modern technologies that would contribute to enhancing the efficiency of the working methods of the General Assembly. A subsequent speaker was also of the view that the General Assembly could benefit from new technologies, while underlining the need to guard the confidentiality and reliability of any new system.

III. Conclusions

74. In accordance with its mandate, the Working Group endeavoured to identify key issues of concern and possible consensus, to examine the current status of implementation of those issues, and to either take action or indicate possible further action to be taken on them.

75. At its sixth meeting, held on 11 September 2012, the Working Group considered and adopted a draft resolution (see paragraph 77 below) and the present report.

IV. Recommendations

76. On the basis of a draft resolution circulated by the Co-Chairs, the Ad Hoc Working Group developed the resolution set out below.

77. At its sixth meeting, on 11 September 2012, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly concluded its work for the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. The Working Group decided to recommend that the General Assembly adopt the following draft resolution:

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its previous resolutions relating to the revitalization of its work, including resolutions 46/77 of 12 December 1991, 47/233 of 17 August 1993, 48/264 of 29 July 1994, 51/241 of 31 July 1997, 52/163 of 15 December 1997, 55/14 of 3 November 2000, 55/285 of 7 September 2001, 56/509 of 8 July 2002, 57/300 of 20 December 2002, 57/301 of 13 March 2003, 58/126 of 19 December 2003, 58/316 of 1 July 2004, 59/313 of 12 September 2005, 60/286 of 8 September 2006, 61/292 of 2 August 2007, 62/276 of 15 September 2008, 63/309 of 14 September 2009, 64/301 of 13 September 2010 and 65/315 of 12 September 2011,

Stressing the importance of the implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly on the revitalization of its work, and noting with concern their lack of implementation and impact on the authority, the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Assembly,

Recognizing the role of the General Assembly in addressing issues of peace and security, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the role and authority of the General Assembly on global matters of concern to the international community, including global governance, as set out in the Charter,

Welcoming the decision of the President of the General Assembly to designate "United Nations reform and revitalization" as one of the pillars of his presidency during the sixty-sixth session,

Welcoming also the decision of the President of the General Assembly to designate "The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means" as the theme of the general debate at its sixty-sixth session,

Recognizing the need to further enhance the role, the authority, the effectiveness and the efficiency of the General Assembly,

Underlining the need for full implementation of the resolutions establishing language arrangements for the official languages of the United Nations and the working languages of the Secretariat, as a basis for an effective, efficient and inclusive Assembly,

Reaffirming the importance for the Secretariat to redouble its efforts for the full implementation of section VIII of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly,

Noting the important role and activities of the Office of the President of the General Assembly,

Reiterating that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is a critical component of the overall reform of the United Nations,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly;

2. *Decides* to establish, at its sixty-seventh session, an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, open to all Member States:

(*a*) To identify further ways to enhance the role, the authority, the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia, by building on the progress achieved in past General Assembly sessions, as well as on previous resolutions and evaluating the status of their implementation;

(*b*) To submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session;

3. *Also decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall continue its review of the inventory of General Assembly resolutions on revitalization annexed to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group submitted at the sixty-third session, and, as a result, issue an updated version of the inventory to be attached to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group at the sixty-seventh session, and also requests the

Secretary-General to submit an update on the provisions of the Assembly resolutions on revitalization addressed to the Secretariat for implementation that have not been implemented, with an indication of the constraints and reasons behind any lack of implementation, for further consideration by the Ad Hoc Working Group at the sixty-seventh session;

Role and authority of the General Assembly

4. *Reaffirms* the role and authority of the General Assembly, including on questions relating to international peace and security, in accordance with Articles 10 to 14 and 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, where appropriate, using the procedures set forth in rules 7 to 10 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, which enable swift and urgent action by the Assembly, bearing in mind that the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter;

5. *Takes note* of recent developments in the General Assembly with regard to responses to emerging challenges and current events of common concern to the international community, and stresses the need for the General Assembly to further actively undertake its role regarding those challenges and events and respond effectively;

6. *Welcomes* the initiative taken by the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations for the sixty-sixth session to identify the peaceful settlement of disputes as one of the main areas of focus and selecting "The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means" as the main theme for the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly;

7. *Welcomes* the holding of thematic debates on current issues of critical importance to the international community and their interactive inclusive character, and invites the President of the General Assembly to continue this practice and to consult with Member States on the possibilities for achieving, where appropriate, results-oriented outcomes in such debates;

8. *Recognizes* the importance and the benefit of continuing interaction between the General Assembly and international or regional forums and organizations dealing with global matters of concern to the international community in the perspective of the revitalization of the work of the Assembly;

9. *Welcomes* the continued practice of holding periodic informal briefings by the Secretary-General on his priorities, travels and most recent activities, including his participation in international meetings and events organized outside the United Nations, and encourages him to continue with this practice;

10. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring increased cooperation, coordination and exchange of information among the principal organs, and welcomes the holding of regular meetings of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session with the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as well as with the Chairs of subsidiary bodies, and briefings to Member States on the outcomes of these meetings on a regular basis, and encourages the continuation of such practice;

11. *Welcomes* the improvements that have been made in the quality of the annual reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly, encourages the

Council to make further improvements as necessary, and takes note of the holding of informal meetings of the President of the Council with all Member States before the preparation of the report;

12. *Notes* that, in accordance with Article 15 and Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter, the Security Council shall submit to the General Assembly an annual report and, when necessary, special reports for its consideration;

13. *Recognizes* that non-implementation of various General Assembly resolutions, in particular those adopted by consensus, may diminish the role and authority of the Assembly, and underlines the important role and responsibility of Member States in their implementation;

14. *Urges* the Secretariat to continue its efforts to raise the visibility of the General Assembly, reaffirms paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 60/286 and decides that the announcements about the work of the principal organs of the United Nations should appear in the *Journal of the United Nations* in the order stipulated in Article 7 of the Charter of the United Nations;

15. *Also urges* the Secretariat to disseminate, in addition to the current practice of e-mail, transmission of important official letters and notifications to all Permanent Missions through fax messages;

Working methods

16. *Welcomes* the briefings by the Chairs of the Main Committees who briefed the Ad Hoc Working Group on their discussions on working methods held in their respective Committees during the sixty-sixth session;

17. *Welcomes* the convening by the President of the General Assembly at the sixty-sixth session of a brainstorming session on the working methods of the Fifth Committee;

18. *Requests* that the General Assembly and its Main Committees, at the sixty-seventh session, in consultation with Member States, continue consideration of and make proposals for the further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of items on the agenda of the Assembly, taking into account the relevant recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group, including through the introduction of a sunset clause, with the clear consent of the sponsoring State or States;

19. *Encourages* each Main Committee to further discuss its working methods at the sixty-seventh session, and invites the Chairs of the Main Committees, at the sixty-seventh session, to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group, as appropriate, on the discussions on the working methods;

20. *Notes with appreciation* that the high-level meetings held at the United Nations give more visibility to very important topics, while mindful of the need to facilitate full participation of all Member States and to preserve the integrity of the general debate in September, and reiterates its invitation to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the Chairs of the Main Committees, in consultation with Member States, to enhance the coordination of the scheduling of high-level meetings with a view to optimizing the number and distribution of such events;

21. *Encourages* Member States, United Nations bodies and the Secretariat to continue to consult on the consolidation of documentation in order to avoid duplication of work, to exercise the fullest possible discipline in striving for concise resolutions, reports and other documentation, inter alia, by referring to previous documents, rather than repeating actual content, and to focus on key themes, and calls on them to observe existing submission deadlines so as to allow for the timely processing of documents to be examined by intergovernmental bodies;

22. *Recalls* its resolution 66/81 of 9 December 2011, which noted the efforts of the Department of Public Information to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly, and requested the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and stresses the importance of further enhancing public and media awareness of the work and decisions of the General Assembly, including through their timely issuance and distribution in all official languages;

23. *Encourages* Member States to make full use of the e-services provided by the Secretariat, taking into account the cost savings and the reduced environmental impact that may accrue from this exercise, in order to improve the quality and distribution of documents;

24. *Decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall remain apprised of options for more time-effective, efficient and secure balloting, reiterating the need to ascertain the credibility, the reliability and the confidentiality of the balloting process, and requests the Secretariat to submit an update in case of any new technological developments, on the understanding that the adoption of any new balloting system in the future will require a decision of the plenary of the General Assembly;

Selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads

25. *Reaffirms its commitment* to continue, in the Ad Hoc Working Group, in accordance with the provisions of Article 97 of the Charter, its consideration of the revitalization of the role of the General Assembly in the selection and the appointment of the Secretary-General, and calls for the full implementation of all relevant resolutions, including resolutions 11 (I), 51/241, 60/286, in particular paragraphs 17 to 22 of the annex thereto, and 64/301;

26. *Recognizes* that the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General differs from the process used with regard to other executive heads in the United Nations system, given the role of the Security Council in accordance with Article 97 of the Charter, and re-emphasizes the need for the process of selection of the Secretary-General to be transparent and inclusive of all Member States;

27. *Takes note* of the recommendation contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the selection and conditions of service of executive heads in the United Nations system organizations proposing that the General Assembly conduct hearings or meetings with candidates running for the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations;

Strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly

28. *Welcomes* the views expressed by the President and the Office of the President of the General Assembly to the Ad Hoc Working Group on the strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the Assembly and its relationship with the Secretariat;

29. *Also welcomes* the periodic briefings by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session to Member States on his recent activities, including official travels, and encourages the continuation of such practice;

30. *Further welcomes* the measures already undertaken to strengthen the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

31. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, proposals to review the budget allocation to the Office of the President of the General Assembly in accordance with existing procedures;

32. *Notes* that the activities of the President of the General Assembly have increased markedly in recent years, recalls provisions regarding support for the Office of the President of the General Assembly in previous resolutions, expresses continued interest in seeking ways to further support the Office, in accordance with existing procedures, in particular rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and, in this context, looks forward to the submission by the Secretary-General of his proposals pursuant to paragraph 32 of resolution 66/246;

33. *Underlines* the importance of the contributions of Member States to the Trust Fund in support of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, notes, in this regard, that no contributions were made to the Fund during the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly and invites Member States to consider contributing to the Fund;

34. *Requests* the Secretary-General, at the sixty-seventh session, to report on the funding and staffing of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, including on any technical, logistical, protocol-related or financial questions;

35. *Notes* the concerns raised on the protocol arrangements in place for the President of the General Assembly, and requests the Secretary-General to further endeavour to ensure, within agreed resources, that the President is provided with proper protocol and security services and adequate office space, with a view to enabling the President to carry out his or her functions in a manner commensurate with the dignity and stature of the Office;

36. *Emphasizes* the need to ensure, within agreed resources, that the Office of the President of the General Assembly is allocated dedicated staff within the Secretariat with responsibility for coordinating the transition between Presidents, managing interactions between the President of the Assembly and the Secretary-General and the retention of institutional memory, and requests the outgoing Presidents of the Assembly to brief their successors on the lessons learned and best practices.

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Agenda item 43
Question of Cyprus

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Letter dated 16 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 16 August 2012, addressed to you by Hilmi Akil, representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 43, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Hüseyin **Müftüoğlu**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 16 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter, dated 11 July 2012, addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative and circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council (A/66/868-S/2012/536), which yet again contains typical assertions of violations of "international air traffic regulations and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus", and to bring to your kind attention the following.

In response to such presumptuous allegations, I wish, once again, to reiterate that flights within the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State, over which the Greek Cypriot administration in South Cyprus has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever. It must be stated that assertions of so-called violations of air traffic regulations are invalid, as the civil aviation authority of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is the only competent authority to provide air traffic and aeronautical information services.

As noted in our previous letters, such contentions are based on the false and unlawful claim that the sovereignty of Greek Cypriot administration extends over the whole island, including the territory of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This presumptuous contention by the Greek Cypriot side ignores the present realities on the island of Cyprus, namely, the existence of two independent, self-governing States, each exercising sovereignty and jurisdiction within its respective territory.

Continuing attempts by the Greek Cypriot side, through often-repeated false claims, to confer legitimacy upon an illegal administration will be futile, since the Turkish Cypriot people will never give in to its unjust demands. What would indeed be conducive to a better atmosphere on the island would be for the Greek Cypriot side to stop misappropriating for itself the rights and responsibilities that it does not legally have, and to cease its hostile and derogatory acts against the Turkish Cypriot people.

Moreover, the Greek Cypriot administration should be reminded that its counterpart is, and has always been, the Turkish Cypriot side, not Turkey, and that its insistent denial of the Turkish Cypriot rights in the North of the island does not bode well for the prospects of a lasting settlement of the Cyprus conflict in line with the established United Nations parameters, namely, a partnership based on a bizonal, bi-communal federation with the political equality of the two Constituent States.

I would like to put on record once again that, despite the Greek Cypriot leadership's apparent lack of enthusiasm for compromise and its denial of the equal partnership rights of the Turkish Cypriots on the island, the Turkish Cypriot side is ready and doing its best for achieving a settlement in the form of a new partnership which will be in line with the established United Nations parameters and body of work.

(*Signed*) Hilmi **Akil**
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

United Nations A/66/893–S/2012/665

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Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Letter dated 23 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with instructions received from the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, I have the honour to draw your attention to ongoing violations of the ceasefire by the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia recorded for June 2012 (see annex). According to the annexed information, during the reporting period, the armed forces of Armenia continued intensive fire on both military and civilian objects in Azerbaijan from their positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and from the territory of Armenia. On 5 June 2012, the armed forces of Armenia made an incursion into the bordering Gazakh district of Azerbaijan, as a result of which five Azerbaijani servicemen lost their lives. The international community vigorously reacted to that provocative action, demanding a stop to the violence and reiterating that the conflict cannot be resolved by the use of force.

I would also like to refer to the recent letters circulated by the Permanent Representative of Armenia (A/66/825-S/2012/428 and A/66/871-S/2012/559), the content of which is nothing other than yet another example of blatant falsification, so characteristic of this Member State's propaganda methods.

It is notable that, while making selective and out-of-context references to statements by international partners on the importance of the principle of the non-use of force, Armenian officials misinterpret this principle as allegedly having the purpose to freeze the military results of this country's illegal use of force against Azerbaijan. It is well known, however, that, in circumstances in which one State has

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neglected its obligation to settle the international dispute by peaceful means and thereafter has illegally used force to occupy the territory of another State, claims that the victim State is under an obligation to respect the principle of the non-use of force vis-à-vis the aggressor State are redundant. Needless to say, if sustained, such claims will inevitably play into the hands of an aggressor, tend to entrench positions of control achieved as a result of the illegal use of force, reinforce the perceptions of the centrality of military strength in international relations and encourage impunity rather than contribute to the triumph of justice.

The principle of the non-use of force, which has been flagrantly violated by Armenia, must be carried into effect by the complete withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the Daghlyq Garabagh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the restoration of Azerbaijani sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and the reaffirmation of this principle in inter-State relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the framework of the settlement of the conflict. It is also essential to reiterate that Armenia is obliged under international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions to put an end to its illegal occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and, consequently, the implementation of that obligation can in no way be introduced as a compromise and used as a bargaining chip in the conflict settlement process.

By claiming that Azerbaijan is allegedly continuing to reject the implementation of confidence-building measures, including the proposal on the withdrawal of snipers from the front line and the agreement to set up a mechanism for the investigation of accidents along the same line, the Armenian propaganda falls into its usual forgetfulness. Otherwise, the officials of that country would recollect their non-compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, which, inter alia, demanded immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Armenian forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, as well as their non-compliance with numerous documents and decisions of other international organizations calling for an end to the occupation of Azerbaijani lands.

Additionally, Armenia deliberately denies the right of more than 1 million Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their homes, and undertakes efforts to alter the demographic balance in the occupied territories and remove any signs of their Azerbaijani cultural and historical roots. Armenia's speculations on confidence-building are also curious insofar as it persistently opposes direct contact between the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Daghlyq Garabagh. Likewise, the undisguised promotion by the leadership of Armenia of the odious ideas of racial superiority, ethnic and religious incompatibility and hatred towards Azerbaijan and other neighbouring nations can hardly contribute to building confidence.

Furthermore, as we have repeatedly stated in our earlier communications and as can be seen from the information attached to the present letter, regular ceasefire violations and deliberate attacks by the armed forces of Armenia against both Azerbaijani military personnel and civilians along the front line and the border between the two States have become more frequent and violent in recent times, resulting in the killing and maiming of many people. It is also notable that, on a number of occasions, such attacks and other provocative actions coincided with the intensification of peace efforts.

The above-mentioned letters from the Permanent Representative of Armenia once again contain comments on the military budget increase of Azerbaijan. It is, however, well known that the annual defence spending of Azerbaijan remains in line with its overall budget increases, that Azerbaijan continues to spend a much smaller percentage of its gross domestic product on its army than Armenia and that the size of the armed forces of Azerbaijan is proportional to its population, territory and length of borders and remains less than that of Armenia. Indeed, comparative analyses show that in correlation to its population, territory, annual budget and gross domestic product, Armenia is the most militarized country of the South Caucasus in terms of military expenditures, foreign military assistance, military personnel and quantity of procured armaments.

Moreover, in gross violation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe to which it is a party, Armenia continues building up its military presence in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and has deployed there more than 40 well-equipped combat units with up to 350 battle tanks, 398 armoured combat vehicles, 425 artillery systems (calibre 100 mm and above) and about 45,000 military personnel. The total number of declared and undeclared Treaty-limited equipment and military personnel of Armenia both in the territory of Armenia and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan amounts to 481 battle tanks, 599 armoured combat vehicles, 718 artillery systems and 91,804 military personnel. At the same time, it should be taken into account that, in accordance with the Treaty, Armenia is allowed to hold on its territory only 220 battle tanks, 220 armoured combat vehicles and 285 artillery systems, whereas under the Concluding Act of the Negotiation on Personnel Strength of Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the armed forces of Armenia can have only up to 60,000 personnel. These figures give a clear picture regarding the extent to which Armenia has exceeded its allowed limit under the Treaty.

The conclusion here is obvious: the behaviour of Armenia definitely contributes to deepening mistrust and making the prospect of a speedy negotiated settlement elusive. It is obvious that the content of all statements and communications from the Government of Armenia is illustrative of its uninterrupted attempts to create a wrong impression of the real situation on the ground and to deflect the attention of the international community from the urgent need to address the main problems caused by this Member State's continuing aggression. Azerbaijan is confident that the achievement of peace, security, stability and confidence is possible, first and foremost, only by removing the consequences of the illegal use of force by Armenia, thus ensuring that the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan is ended and that the rights of Azerbaijani internally displaced persons to return to their homes and to their property and possessions are guaranteed and implemented.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35, 39, 67 and 83, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Tofig **Musayev**
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex to the letter dated 23 August 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Violation of the ceasefire by the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia* for June 2012

No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Fire point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
1.	1 June	01.45-02.00	The area near Berkaber village, Ijevan district, Armenia	The area near Gizil Hajili village, Gazakh district, Azerbaijan	Firearm and machine gun	–
2.	1 June	03.30-03.40	Occupied unnamed heights, Dashkesen district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–
3.	1 June	10.45-11.05	Occupied area, Goyarkh, Tar-Tar district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–
4.	1 June	13.25-13.35	The area near Chinarli village, Berd district, Armenia	The area near Kokhanabi village, Tovuz district, Azerbaijan	Firearm and machine gun	–
5.	2 June	01.35-01.40	Occupied area near Horadiz village, Fizuli district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–
6.	4 June	00.50-01.05	Occupied area near Goyarkh village, Tar-Tar district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–
7.	4 June	16.00-16.20 23.40-23.50	Occupied unnamed heights and the area near Tapgaragoyunlu village, Geranboy district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–

* Settlements of the Republic of Azerbaijan included in this information are under occupation by the Republic of Armenia or situated close to fire point areas.

No	*Date*	*Time*	*Fire point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
8.	4 June	23.20-23.30 23.35-23.40	Occupied unnamed heights and areas near Ashaghy Veyselli, Garakhanbeyli, Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly, Gorgan and Ashaghy Seyidahmedli villages, Fizuli district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
9.	5 June	00.20-00.30 02.45-02.50 02.55-03.10 05.10-05.15	Occupied unnamed heights and areas near Ashaghy Veyselli, Garakhanbeyli, Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly, Gorgan and Ashaghy Seyidahmedli villages, Fizuli district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
10.	5 June	02.55-03.10 06.30	From their positions on the territory of Armenia, that country's armed forces made an incursion into the territory of Azerbaijan and opened fire on the positions of the armed forces of Azerbaijan in Gazakh district situated on the border between the two countries	Gazakh district, Azerbaijan	Firearm and machine gun	Five soldiers of the armed forces of Azerbaijan, Zulfugar Atashli, Amil Aliyev, Vahid Bahirov, Khalid Azizov and Elchin Ismayilov, were killed
11.	5 June	03.00-03.10	Occupied unnamed heights, Khojavand district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–
12.	5 June	03.10-03.20	Occupied area near Mehdili village, Jabrayil district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–
13.	5 June	05.00-05.20	Occupied area near Javahirli and Yusifjanly villages, Aghdam district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–

No	*Date*	*Time*	*Fire point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
14.	5-6 June	At different times from 18.00 on 5 June to 08.00 on 6 June	Along the front line from positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and along the border from the territory of Armenia	Adjacent areas in various directions	Firearm and machine gun	–
15.	6 June	At different times	Along the front line from positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and along the border from the territory of Armenia	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
16.	7-8 June	At different times from 20.00 on 7 June to 08.00 on 8 June	Occupied area, Aghdam district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
17.	8 June	12.00-12.30	Occupied areas, Ortag Gyshlag, Ortag Garvand, Bash Garvand and Farzali villages, Aghdam district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
18.	8-9 June	At different times from 20.00 on 8 June to 08.00 on 9 June	Along the front line from positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and along the border from the territory of Armenia	Adjacent areas in various directions	Firearm and machine gun	–
19.	10-11 June	At different times from 20.00 on 10 June to 08.00 on 11 June	Along the front line from positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and along the border from the territory of Armenia	Adjacent areas in various directions	Firearm and machine gun	–
20.	11-12 June	At different times from 20.00 on 11 June to 08.00 on 12 June	Along the front line from positions in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and along the border from the territory of Armenia	Adjacent areas in various directions	Firearm and machine gun	–

No	*Date*	*Time*	*Fire point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
21.	12-13 June	At different times from 08.00 on 12 June to 08.00 on 13 June	Occupied areas near Gizil Oba, Goyarkh and Seysulan villages, Tar-Tar district; Tapgaragoyunlu village, Geranboy district; Merzili, Shurabad and Yusifjanly villages, Aghdam district; Horadiz, Gorgan, Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly, Ashaghy Seyidahmedli and Ashaghy Veyselli villages, Fizuli district; Mehdili village, Jabrayil district; and unnamed heights near Khojavand district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
22.	13-14 June	At different times from 08.00 on 13 June to 08.00 on 14 June	Occupied areas near Aghdam, Geranboy, Fizuli and Khojavand districts, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
23.	15-16 June	At different times	Occupied areas near Merzili village, Aghdam district; Tapgaragoyunlu village, Geranboy district; Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly village, Fizuli district; Chilyabert village, Tar-Tar district; and Mehdili village, Jabrayil district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
24.	17-18 June	At different times	Occupied areas near Shykhlar, Merzili and Yusifjanly villages, Aghdam district; Goyarkh village, Tar-Tar district; and Tapgaragoyunlu village, Geranboy district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–

No	*Date*	*Time*	*Fire point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
25.	18-19 June	At different times	The area near Berkaber village, Ijevan district, Armenia, and occupied areas near Yusifjanly village, Aghdam district; Gorgan, Ashaghy Veyselli, Horadiz, Ashaghy Seyidahmedli and Garakhanbeyli villages, Fizuli district; Kuropatkino village, Khojavand district; and Tapgaragoyunlu village, Geranboy district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	—
26.	19-20 June	At different times	Areas near Berkaber village, Ijevan district, and Bakeramavan village, Noyemberyan district, Armenia, and occupied areas near Mehdili village, Jabrayil district; Goyarkh and Gizil Oba villages, Tar-Tar district; Gulustan village, Geranboy district; Ashaghy Veyselli and Garakhanbeyli villages, Fizuli district; and Kuropatkino village, Khojavand district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	—
27.	20-21 June	At different times	The area near Voskevan village, Noyemberyan district, Armenia, and occupied areas near Shykhlar and Kengerli villages, Aghdam district, and Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly and Gorgan villages, Fizuli district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	—

No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Fire point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
28.	21-22 June	At different times	Occupied areas near Tapgaragoyunlu village, Geranboy district; Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly, Ashaghy Seyidahmedli and Gorgan villages, Fizuli district; Gizil Oba village, Tar-Tar district; and Mehdili village, Jabrayil district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
29.	23 June	At different times	The area near Berdavan village, Noyemberyan district, Armenia, and occupied areas near Garakhanbeyli, Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly and Ashaghy Seyidahmedli villages, Fizuli district; Yusifjanly and Merzili villages, Aghdam district; unnamed heights near Gizil Oba and Goyarkh villages, Tar-Tar district; and Khojavand district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
30.	24-25 June	At different times	The area near Barekamavan village, Noyemberyan district, Armenia, and occupied areas near Yusifjanly, Shykhlar, Javahirli and Bash Garvand villages, Aghdam district; Goyarkh village, Tar-Tar district; and unnamed heights near Jabrayil district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas		–

No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Line point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
31.	26-27 June	At different times	Occupied areas near Shykhlar, Javahirli, Shirvanly and Kengerli villages, Aghdam district; Kuropatkino village, Khojavand district; and unnamed heights near Jabrayil district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
32.	26-27 June	At different times	Areas near Barekamavan and Berdavan villages, Noyemberyan district; Berkaber village, Ijevan district; and unnamed heights in Berd district, Armenia	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
33.	27 June	At different times	Occupied areas near Javahirli, Bash Garvand and Shurabad villages, Aghdam district; Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly village, Fizuli district; Kuropatkino village, Khojavand district; and unnamed heights near Jabrayil and Dashkesen districts, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–
34.	27-28 June	At different times	The area near Berkaber village, Ijevan district, Armenia	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	–
35.	27-28 June	In the morning hours	Occupied areas near Javahirli, Bash Garvand and Shurabad villages, Aghdam district; Ashaghy Abdulrahmanly village, Fizuli district; Kuropatkino village, Khojavand district; and unnamed heights near Jabrayil and Dashkesen districts, Azerbaijan	Adjacent areas	Firearm and machine gun	–

No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Fire point area*	*Direction*	*Weapons used*	*Casualties and damages*
36.	28-29 June	At different times	Occupied areas near Javahirli and Shykhlar villages, Aghdam district; Horadiz village, Fizuli district; Yarimja and Namirli villages, Tar-Tar district; and unnamed heights, Khojavand and Dashkesen districts, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	—
37.	29-30 June	At different times	Occupied areas near Ashaghy Seyidahmedli village, Fizuli district; and Seysulan village, Tar-Tar district, Azerbaijan	Adjacent area	Firearm and machine gun	—